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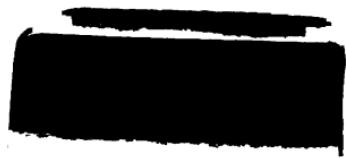
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# **SOUTH-WEST AFRICA**



# SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

BY

WILLIAM EVELEIGH

AUTHOR OF

"A SHORT HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN METHODISM"

Un

T. FISHER UNWIN, LTD.  
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**GENERAL BOTHA**

W.W.

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## FOREWORD

"Of making many books there is no end," said the Preacher, but strange to say, there is not a single book in the English language that deals with South-West Africa of modern days. Many references to the country are found in the older books of South African travel and exploration, and some good works have been written in later times by German authors; but, unfortunately, the German publications are not available for the average reader. In the present volume an attempt has been made to set before the reader a brief but comprehensive account of the country, its history, its people, its resources, and its



**FOREWORD**

possibilities. It is impossible in a small book to deal more than briefly with the subject, and very slight treatment has had to suffice for many matters of interest. I hope, however, that I have succeeded in conveying a clear impression of what South-West Africa is, and what it may become. Brief and unpretentious though the book is, it may serve to dispel the notion that the country is nothing more than a desert and of very little value to the Empire.

My thanks are due to Dr. Rudolf Marloth, of Cape Town ; Prof. E. H. Schwatz, of the Rhodes University College, Grahamstown ; Dr. Wm. Flint, Librarian of the Houses of Parliament, Cape Town ; Mr. F. W. Fitz-simons, Director of the Museum, Port Elizabeth ; and Mr. John Ross, of the

## **FOREWORD**

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**Kimberley Public Library, for valuable suggestions. My debt to various writers I have endeavoured to acknowledge elsewhere.**

**W. E.**

**Kimberley, South Africa.**

**1915.**



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## **THE LAND**



# SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

## CHAPTER I

### THE LAND

A GLANCE at the map of Africa shows that the territory now known as British South-West Africa—formerly German South-West Africa—is a triangular mass with the abrupt apex resting on the Orange River. It comprises Ovamboland, in the north ; Damaraland, the central portion of the country ; Great Namaqualand, in the south, and a tongue of land running out from the north-east corner called the Caprivizipfel, and has a total area of 322,450 square miles. This vast territory, into which half a dozen Englands could

be dropped with ease, is bounded on the north by the Kunene River, Portuguese West Africa, and Rhodesia ; on the east by British Bechuanaland, and the Gordonia portion of the Cape Province ; on the west by the Atlantic Ocean ; and on the south by the Orange River. Some idea of the length of the eastern boundary, for instance, may be obtained when it is stated that while the southern extremity touches the Orange, a distance of only 400 miles from Cape Town, the far corner of the Caprivi enclave is north-west of the Victoria Falls. No less than 900 miles of coast-line stretch from the mouth of the Orange to the Kunene estuary.

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES

The physical structure of the country is extremely simple. The dominant physical

facts are: a slowly rising sandy coast belt; a high interior plateau, broken by isolated mountain ranges; and a gently falling eastern strip of sandy country that merges in the level expanse of the Kalahari Desert.

### THE COAST STRIP OR THE NAMIB

The coast strip is a desert, varying from 15 to 100 miles in width, stretching from the Kunene to the Orange, in which at only a few places is fresh water obtainable. To this desert the designation "Namib" has been applied—a name originally restricted to the middle portion of the strip. Dr. Stapff divides it into three parts: the stony desert north of Walvis Bay, the valley of the Kuisip converging on Walvis Bay, and the long sand dunes that run south from Walvis Bay to the Orange.

As a picture of dreariness and desolation this desert in places is not surpassed even by the Sahara. South of Walvis Bay there run from north to south mile upon mile of yellowish grey sand in long lines of immense dunes some of them 600 feet in height. Dark, rocky hills, with faces scarred and scoured into grotesque shapes, cut across the lines here and there, and heap up the sand at their base on the windward side in numerous hillocks. In some of the depressions formed by the dunes the white basins of *vlets* reflect the burning rays of the sun. Fierce sandstorms rage over the dunes at intervals, and the dense yellow clouds sweep along close to the earth at a terrific speed, blotting out the light of the sun, raining a perfect hurricane of gritty particles upon the traveller unfortunate enough to be found in the track of the tornado.

Seen from the coast the Namib has the general appearance of a vast plain with a boundless horizon, but the country ascends continually though almost imperceptibly towards the interior ; at a distance of only 60 miles from Walvis Bay, for instance, the traveller finds himself some 2,000 feet above sea-level.

The prevailing formations along the coast are : gneiss, granite, quartzites, mica schists, recent chalks, crystalline limestones.

"The whole coast, several miles wide," says Dr. Versfeld, "is a portion of a vast Titanic pudding, whose ingredients have been well stirred."\*

There is a concensus of opinion among geologists that at some remote period a

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\* "Notes on the Geological Formation of Portions of German South-West Africa"—*South African Journal of Science*, June, 1911.

tremendous upheaval of the marine bed took place, resulting in the present coast formation. The disintegration of the gneiss rocks and the action of the furious trade winds, have since led to the formation of the sand dunes.

The natural harbours are surprisingly few for such a lengthy coast-line. Walvis Bay, which lies almost exactly midway between the Orange and Kunene estuaries, is the principal inlet. A deep channel gives access to large steamers, which are able to lie at anchor in a fine, oval basin some 20 square miles in extent, completely sheltered from the strong prevailing winds. This Bay, with 450 square miles of adjoining territory, has been in the possession of Great Britain since 1878, but very little use has been made of it.

Luderitz Bay, some 250 miles south of

Walvis Bay, is the next considerable inlet. It ramifies to the right and left for about five miles south of the entrance, and here, too, large steamers find safe anchorage. Swakop Bay, 25 miles north of Walvis Bay, is merely an open roadstead with a landing jetty.

### THE CENTRAL PLATEAU

We will begin in the north with Ovamboland and follow southward the line of the main ridge that forms the inner plateau.

Separated from the highlands of Angola by the gorges traversed by the Kunene, the rocky heights of Ovamboland rise but slowly at first above the general level, but south of the Otavi Hills in Damaland they gradually ascend until a veritable highland system is developed with towering masses of table rocks and huge

dome-shaped summits. Mount Omatako, which has an altitude of 8,500 feet, is the highest peak. Around it, but some distance from it, grouped like satellites, are numerous other imposing mountains from 5,000 to 6,000 feet in height. In the clear air of the uplands the granite pinnacles of these peaks are visible from a great distance. Huge valleys or gorges are a characteristic of this part of Damaraland. The mountain plateaux are widely extended. In the region of Windhoek several rivers have their rise. Further south the ridge falls again to a level of about 3,000 feet, and in many places is broken into by isolated ranges of manifold forms, while the lower levels are studded with stony kopjes.

The country along the eastern border consists of undulating plains and large

areas of sandy land which closely resemble the Kalahari.

In all these uplands the prevailing formations are granite, or mica schist. Surface limestone occurs everywhere.

### GREAT NAMAQUALAND

Great Namaqualand, the country that stretches from the south of Damaraland to the Orange River, is a land of rugged hills, stony kopjes, and boundless plains. In the Karas Mountains, the main ridge rises again to a height of 6,600 feet above the sea, and the plateaux have a north to south direction. The boundless plains, really extended tablelands, are a principal feature of the country, and they are invariably sandy.

"Sir," said a person who knew the country to Dr. Moffat in 1818, "you will

find plenty of sand and stones, a thinly scattered population always suffering from want of water, on plains and hills roasted like a burnt loaf under the scorching rays of a cloudless sun."

"Of the truth of this description," says Moffat in his laconic fashion, "I soon had abundant evidence."\*

Although this portion of South-West Africa is regarded as semi-desert, at rare intervals after rain the plains are covered with long coarse grass and then they have to English eyes the appearance of a vast field of waving oats.

### THE ORANGE RIVER BASIN

Trekking south through Great Namaqualand, toiling over the blistering wastes, the

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\* Moffat's "Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa," p. 76.

traveller experiences a peculiar sensation of unexpectedness when on rounding a kopje he sees below him in the near distance a long, twisted line of vivid green. This is the line of the Orange River.

As very little is known about the course of this, the largest river in South Africa, a brief description may not be without interest.

The river enters South-West Africa along a deep channel and winds its sinuous way like a giant snake between towering precipices and overhanging mountains grey with age along cañons reminiscent of Colorado. In some of the deep, rocky gorges the stream is inaccessible on either side, since the overhanging escarpments of the surrounding plateau rise sheer from the water many hundreds of feet, and a thirsty traveller might actually perish of thirst as he

looked down upon the tantalising waters from the precipitous banks that offered not a single practicable way of descent. At intervals the stream broadens to a considerable distance and takes on the appearance of a quiet lake reflecting the image of the willow and mimosa trees that fringe its banks; islands of vivid green dot the waters; flamingos, ibises, and other wading birds, move leisurely in the shallows, while ever and anon birds of brilliant plumage dart across the surface. It then presents a picture of considerable charm. Barred in its approach to the sea by rocky hills and granite cliffs, in its eager efforts to find the line of least resistance, the river twists and turns, flowing now north, now south, and in one place actually doubling back to the east. On emerging from the mountain ranges it sprawls itself over a

wide area as if reluctant to lose its greatness in the ocean. Its mouth is generally blocked for a number of years by a continuous narrow sand barrier formed by the big breakers of the Atlantic, and while the waves pound the sand with great fierceness on the one side, the cool, fresh waters of the river gently lap it on the other side. When the river comes down in strong flood the dam bursts with a crash and a roar heard many miles distant. Mr. A. D. Lewis, a Government engineer, visited the mouth at the end of 1912, having made a survey journey along the river valley from Pella to the Atlantic. He is actually the first scientifically trained individual to make the journey. His report,\* together with plans

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\* Report of Director of Irrigation for period 1st January, 1912, to March, 1913.—*Cape Times, Ltd.*, Cape Town.

and reproductions of photographs, is of absorbing interest.

### THE RIVERS

The rivers of South-West Africa, like many others in South Africa, are found, mostly, on the maps. Though the country is trenched by the beds of many rivers, not a single perennial stream reaches the sea between the Kunene and the Orange. On account of the great depth of its channel below the adjacent land, the Orange is of no economic value to the country. The Swakop, which has a total length of 250 miles, rises to the east of the Damara highlands in the Waterberg and traverses the plateau through deep, rocky gorges. Occasionally it flows into the sea north of Walvis Bay. The Kuisip rises in the mountains beyond Windhoek and intersects the Namib

plain south of the Swakop to a depth of over 600 feet, but it rarely reaches the ocean. The last occasion on which it pushed its way through to the Atlantic previous to the present year, was in 1904. South of the Kuisip are other watercourses which are arrested without even forming channels to the sea. During the greater part of the year the Swakop and the Kuisip are non-existent as rivers ; a line of stunted willows or acacias, or, perhaps, a few muddy pools, mark the river courses. After the storms, however, they are raging torrents for a brief period, and immense volumes of water rush along their beds.

The feeble, intermittent streams on the east of the divide fall for the most part into the saline marshes of the Kalahari. The Fish River flows south through Great Namaqualand, and sometimes reaches the

Orange. Lake Etosha in the north is a lagoon about sixty miles wide and fifty miles in length. When full one or two rivers issue from it.

But water is not the scarce commodity that one might imagine it to be, except, perhaps, in the Namib, for the springs or *fonteins* are a peculiar feature of the inner plateau. The most remarkable of these are situated in a hill to the north of Windhoek. No less than five springs issue from the limestone. They are all warm, and lie approximately in a straight line at intervals of a few hundred yards apart. It is a somewhat curious phenomenon that the temperatures vary considerably ; a difference of no less than 54°F. has been noted between one and two. If the streams are all from the same source, as seems likely, they are probably influenced in their passage

to the surface by the geological formation. Cold springs also exist in the limestone below the hot springs. The waters of the warm spring at Warmbad, in South Great Namaqualand, have strong sanative qualities. Centres so far distant from each other as Bethanien, in the south-west, Omaruru, north-east of Walvis Bay, and Gobabis, east of Windhoek, on the Kalahari border, also have their springs.

Water may generally be obtained even in the dry season by digging beneath the alluvium of a river bed, especially where a ledge of rocks crosses the watercourse. In some places, notably on the borders of the Namib and in the eastern areas, the water found by boring is brackish, and often unfit for human consumption. After the rainstorms water often lies for long periods in the natural depressions or *vlets*; these

afford a good supply for cattle and game.

In some of these depressions, when the water around the edges has dried up, an incrustation of salt is left, which, as Dr. Moffat found in Namaqualand nearly a hundred years ago, "crackles under the feet like hoar-frost."

### SCENERY

The lover of natural scenery will find little to attract him in such parts of the country as the Namib, Great Namaqualand, or the eastern steppes, for over large areas the aspects of nature are so consistently uniform as to become painfully monotonous, and this uniformity, combined with the absence of foliage and verdure and lakes and running streams, is very depressing to the traveller. But the country is not the

wilderness many have been led to believe. When once the desert belt is crossed and the mountain plateaux are reached, some bold and striking mountain scenery meets the eye. Stupendous masses of naked rock, on which the light strikes bright and hard, rise into the sky, while other frowning heights tower aloft, menacing and fearful. In the Waterberg the numerous rocky summits, with their clear-cut edges and rifted walls, resemble in places the famous Giant's Causeway, and in their boldness and variety of outline they present a scene of extraordinary rugged grandeur. Here are Cleopatra's Needles, embattled castles, lofty pinnacles, and sculptured turrets, all standing out bold and clear in the amazingly thin, translucent air, and visible from immense distances. Between Omaruru and Okahandja, where hilly country is found

alternating with level plains, some fine landscape views may be obtained. The falls on some of the rivers after the rains make picnic spots and pleasure resorts of rare delight. The voice of running waters, a sound but rarely heard in South Africa, can then be enjoyed in some of the deep gorges.

In certain portions of Ovamboland there are woodlands, glades, and clearings that present the aspect of a boundless park. Windhoek, set in a circle of giant mountains on the slope of a hill, has quite a picturesque situation.

South-West Africa, too, has all the charm of colour for which southern Africa is famous the world over. On the uplands the morning and the evening are times when the eye is filled and completely delighted with the warmth and richness of tone about the landscape.

"At last morning broke," says one new to the country, in a description of the sunrise, "and delicate rosy stripes of light shot up toward the zenith. The colours grew rapidly deeper, brighter, and stronger. The red was glorious in its fullness, and the blue beautiful in its purity. The light mounted and extended itself, ascending as over a new world a thousand times more beautiful than the old one. Then came the sun, big and clear, looking like a great, placid, wide-opened eye."

At night the moon and stars shine with a fire and brilliancy that never fail to amaze the visitor from the northern lands.



## **CLIMATE AND RAINFALL**



## CHAPTER II

### CLIMATE AND RAINFALL

FROM what has been said about the diversity of the physical conditions of the country it will be readily inferred that there is a considerable variation of climate. When it is remembered, too, that the land lies within the tropic of Capricorn and corresponds in latitude to the central provinces of India, between Bombay and Calcutta, the reader will be prepared to learn that it is excessively hot in the summer months and very unhealthy. As a matter of fact the climate as a whole is healthy and the heat much less trying than the traveller from India expects to find in

such a latitude. Various factors account for this, as we shall see.

There are two seasons, summer and winter; summer lasts from October to April, and winter from April to September.

The heat is sometimes great on the coast, some little distance from the sea, where the sea mists do not reach, rising occasionally to  $120^{\circ}$  F. in the shade. But at noon the fresh south-west wind blows strongly from the sea, and the nights are comparatively cool and refreshing. The sudden fall of temperature at sunset is often a source of danger to those who have not learned to guard themselves against rapid variations of temperature. Strangely enough, the hottest day in the year may be a day in the middle of winter, for it is in the winter that a fierce, hot, desert wind from the east comes sweeping across the country, sending up the

thermometer with a rush. The winter may thus have the hottest, as well as the coldest, days of the year. A comparison of the temperatures of the principal centres of the country with Kenhardt and Kimberley, two of the hottest districts in the Cape Province, may not be without interest :

		November.	February.	July.
Windhoek -	-	86	82	68
Swakopmund	-	58	62	55
Walvis Bay	-	60	64	57
Luderitzbucht	-	62	68	55
Omaruru -	-	82	82	62
Rehoboth -	-	86	86	60
Kenhardt -	-	74	85	57
Kimberley -	-	78	82	55

The feature of the coast climate is the heavy fogs occasioned by the proximity of the cold waters of the Benguela current to a heated interior, and the contact of the

cool south-west winds with the north-west air currents. These fogs veil the seaboard in a thick haze during the night and often last to noon ; they supply, however, a considerable amount of moisture to the coast border of the Namib, since they are sometimes so heavy that in a single night the sand is moistened to a depth of one or two inches, and the water flows down the stems of shrubs into the ground to a depth of six inches. Heavy rain occurs at very rare intervals. These conditions suggest that quite a useful supply of water might be obtained by the construction of dew-ponds, or mist-ponds, as they are now known to be, of which particulars are given by Mr. E. A. Martin in his recent work, entitled, "Dew-ponds : History, Observation and Experiment." A whole year may pass without a single shower. Walvis Bay has an annual

average rainfall of less than one inch. At such centres as Luderitzbucht, Swakopmund, and Walvis Bay, water for drinking purposes is condensed from the sea. Before the condensing plant was erected water had to be brought all the way up from Cape Town.

In the north and north-east the climate is almost tropical, but on the central plateau it is temperate, with great fluctuations of temperature during the day. The great heat of the sun during the summer months would make it rather trying for Europeans, were it not for the altitude and the great dryness of the air. As we have shown, the plateau is from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level, and this is a factor of considerable importance in determining climatic conditions. The climate resembles parts of Rhodesia, and while there are hot days in

the summer, for the most part the air is fresh, clear, and like elixir.

Great Namaqualand has a very warm summer; the shade temperature of the Orange River valley is often 110° F., while on the plains great fluctuations in the day temperature prevail. In the winter severe frosts and snow may be experienced, and snow may be seen on the Karas Mountains. There are also occasional frosts in the Windhoek region in this cold season.

#### THE RAINFALL

South-West Africa is really a continuation of the Bechuanaland plateau, a notoriously dry territory, and the rainfall is even less than in Bechuanaland, if we except the northern territories, since very little of the vapour from the distant Indian Ocean can reach the country. The Eastern slope,

which faces the Indian Ocean, receives a fair supply of moisture. The Windhoek region has an average annual rainfall of 15 inches. Whirlwinds often herald the approach of the rain. In the warmer north and north-east 24 inches is often registered in a year. Great Namaqualand is much drier, 6 or 7 inches being about the average. The rain comes almost invariably in the form of violent thunderstorms which sweep along in a limited area. It is a common experience to travel over a stretch of dry and barren land to enter suddenly a tract of vivid green where the vegetation is in full activity, so local is the distribution of the rain. Severe hailstorms are sometimes responsible for much damage, since the hailstones are often as big as marbles. Within half an hour of the passing of one of these storms, the thermometer has been seen to drop from

110° F. to 68° F. Droughts of great severity continue for years together in these regions, but as soon as the rain comes, the country revives as if by magic ; grass and flowers spring up from the steaming ground with amazing rapidity, and the once bare and blistered plain is transformed into a vast carpet of vivid green and brilliant hues.

The Namib has a rainfall of less than an inch, but in places where the desert borders the inner plateau, three or four inches may be registered during the year.

One of the journals of the Royal Meteorological Society has printed the rainfall record of South-West Africa. Dr. Emil Ottweiler is responsible for it, and the observations extended over periods varying from one to twenty-three years. This record is of real value, and we give the

average fall at some of the stations mentioned.

Stations.	Height above Sea Level.	Rainfall.
	feet.	
Luderitzbucht	13	0·54
Swakopmund	23	1·16
Windhoek	5,350	14·07
Grootfontein	5,020	24·37
Olukonda	3,510	22·91
Keetmanshoop	3,373	5·85
Bethanien	3,068	4·52
Berseba	3,490	3·11
Haris	6,300	11·24
Otjimbinque	3,084	5·38
Karibib	—	6·01
Zesfontein	—	2·73
Gibeon	3,700	6·82
Rehoboth	4,700	10·45
Oas	4,500	18·69
Gobabis	4,650	18·53
Omaruru	3,800	10·85
Hatsamas	—	14·06

The rainfall, scanty as it is, generally descends in sharp storms and showers, and as the ground is often baked hard by the

heats of the sun, it quickly runs away to the watercourses, but in recent years dams have been made in order to store the precious liquid, and a well-filled dam may hold sufficient water to supply a large farm for the space of a year or two.

### HEALTH CONDITIONS

The physical conditions already described determine the healthfulness of the country ; the sun, the elevation, the dryness, being responsible for the good climate of the interior. The direct rays of the sun are very strong during the day, for clouds are infrequent ; many weeks may pass without the smallest cloud being visible ; but these rays are not dangerous, and sun-stroke is unusual. In India, as Bryce has shown, one has always to be mounting guard against the sun. "He is a formidable

and ever-present enemy, and he is the more dangerous the longer you live in the country. In South Africa it is only because he dries up the soil so terribly that the traveller wishes to have less of him."\*

The extreme dryness of the air on the plateaux enables Europeans to endure heat that would be unbearable in London or New York. A shade temperature of 108° F. in either of these cities would be responsible for many a collapse, but it would pass at Windhoek without anyone being the worse for it. Even on the Namib some compensation would be afforded by the sea breezes.

There are people who have lived at Luderitzbucht, one of the driest parts of the Namib, continuously for eight or ten years, and they are exceedingly active and healthy, while

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\* "Impressions of South Africa," p. 13.

at Windhoek strong and sturdy children are developing a splendid physique in the pure, bracing air of the plateau. Malarial fever, which hangs like a death cloud over many parts of Africa, is sometimes found in the north and north-west of the country, but it prevails in a mild form. Last year, for instance, there were only six deaths from this cause among Europeans, right through the country. The dreaded black-water fever is occasionally met with in the tropical north. The diseases common along the coast are mostly intestinal, due almost entirely to the lack of a good supply of pure water. Rheumatic troubles are also fairly common on the seaboard. The death-rate for 1913 was only 11·3 per thousand of the white population, and 21·75 per thousand among the natives. Inflammation of the lungs, due largely to unhealthy dwellings

and lack of care with clothing, accounts for the higher mortality among the natives.

The dryness and purity of the air away from the coast account for the absence of most forms of chest disease. More than one sufferer from consumption in its earliest stages, who has come from Europe, has found a new lease of life on the salubrious uplands. There can be no doubt that in spite of the abnormal heat sometimes experienced, South-West Africa is well fitted to afford a pleasant home and to maintain in vigour people drawn from the cooler regions of Europe. That healthy children can be reared here has been already demonstrated.



## **THE FLORA OF THE COUNTRY**



## **CHAPTER III**

### **THE FLORA OF THE COUNTRY**

"SOUTH-WEST AFRICA," a writer on the flora of the country has recently stated, "is distinguished neither by a great variety of its flora nor by the presence of plants or trees of any singular kind." How far this is from the truth will be made clear in this chapter.

For a dry country South-West Africa is fairly rich in vegetation, and it may be useful to give some slight impression of the part which the vegetation plays in the landscape and in the economic conditions of the country, cursory though our examination must be.

## THE COAST REGIONS

To begin with the Namib. The general aspect of the vegetation here is monotonous, since there are but few plants that rise to any appreciable height from the sandy surface to break the dull level. No tree grows within a dozen miles of the coast, except in an occasional watercourse where there is underground moisture.

The Kokerboom, *Aloe dichotoma*, however, often occurs as a solitary tree, and occasionally forms little groves on the limestone hills of the eastern portion of the Namib. In the winter, when they bear large clusters of bright yellow flowers, they give quite a touch of colour to the drab landscape.

The northern Namib has two plants of singular interest in the Welwitschia and the Naras. The Welwitschia, *Welwitschia*

*Bainesii*, is in reality a tree with a fairly thick trunk that terminates abruptly just above the ground. Two thick, leathery leaves are permanent and grow continuously at their base until they sometimes reach a length of 10 feet, by which time they are frayed into numerous snake-like thongs. The plant flowers in January and the cones ripen in May. The roots of the largest plants may be traced to a very great depth in the sand. "This plant," says Dr. Marloth,\* "is of great scientific interest, being the most highly developed gymnospermous plant known to us either in the living or the fossil state. It is not a connecting link between the gymnosperms and the angiosperms, but the final stage of a separate line of development of the vegetable kingdom, that, as far

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\* "The Flora of South Africa," Vol. I., by Rudolf Marloth.

as is known to us, led no further." The Welwitschia was first discovered by Dr. Welwitsch in Southern Angola in 1865. It has not been found south of the Kuisip district.

The curious Naras, *Acanthosicyos horrida*, has been well termed the "Wonder of the Waste," for this shrubby, leafless member of the order *Cucurbitacea* spreads over the sand dunes in dense straggling masses, defying all the sandstorms that threaten to bury it. Instead of tendrils it bears sharp thorns, while the main root may be as thick as a man's arm, with a length of 20 to 40 feet. The fruit is about the size of a very big orange, and the skin encloses a yellow pulp of a rich flavour and a number of seeds similar in taste to almonds. The fruit is greatly relished by the natives, and, as it has extraordinary nutritive

## THE FLORA OF THE COUNTRY 57

value, they almost live on it. The seeds are stored for the dry season, when no fruit can be obtained. The existence of this plant always indicates underground moisture. Both the Welwitschia and the Naras flourish in the vicinity of Walvis Bay, but the Naras has been found in recent years in several places in the southern Namib. It is believed that the species does not occur naturally so far south, but has been introduced by natives. Its true southern limit is not far from the southern extremity of Walvis Bay.\*

In the region described as the Upper Kuisip Zone, which embraces the valley of the Kuisip, among the fairly abundant vegetation, with camelthorns, ebony trees, and wild figs, the handsome Ana tree,

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\* Pearson, "The Travels of a Botanist in South-West Africa"—*The Geographical Journal*, May, 1910.

*Acacia albida*, is found. The fruit of this remarkable tree is a legume. The beans, when ripe and dry, are used for fodder for cattle, and they have extraordinary fattening properties. Cattle also relish the leaves of the tree.

The flora of the desert south of Luderitzbucht is much poorer than that of the northern portion, and, as Schinz points out, the difference is probably accounted for by the presence of a more copious supply of underground water in the northern area. But the Namib has a richer vegetation than is generally supposed.

"As an illustration," writes Dr. Marloth, who made a careful examination of the Lower Namib in 1909, "it may be mentioned that I have observed over twenty species of *Mesembrianthemum*, five species of *Pelargonium* (mostly shrubby), two of

*Sarcocaulon*, three of *Lycium*, two of *Zygophyllum*, two of *Salsola*, three of *Othonna*, five shrubby Leguminosæ (*Lebeckia* and *Crotalaria*), five species of *Euphorbia*, and many other genera represented by one or two species." \*

He distinguishes four formations according to the nature of the ground: the seashore, the sandy plains, the rocky hills, and the gravel-covered flats of the rising plains beyond the coast-belt; and we cannot do better than adopt his convenient division.

*The seashore*.—The sand dunes are devoid of vegetation on account of the ever-shifting nature of the sand, and they present an unforgettable scene of sterility and dreariness. A few plants specially adapted

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\* "The Vegetation of the Southern Namib"—*The South African Journal of Science*, January, 1910.

to salt water, such as *Salicornia natalensis* and *Bassia diffusa*, are found in the shallows or around the lagoons.

*The sandy plains and dunes.*—Further inland *Salsola Zeyheri* is common. This low, tight-looking shrub, grey in colour, about 2 to 3 feet in height, has considerable value, since it forms good food for the camels used for transport purposes. Coarse dune-grasses are found in sheltered patches. The *Mesembryanthemum* is a characteristic Namib plant ; it grows on rocks as well as sand.

*The rocky hills.*—Here we find a more varied vegetation. The well-known Kokerboom (*Aloe dichotoma*) is a conspicuous feature. It is interesting to notice that the name Koker or Quiver (D. *koker*, a case sheath ; G. *Kocher*, a quiver) was given to this tree because the Bushmen and

## THE FLORA OF THE COUNTRY 61

Hottentots used the pithy branches to make quivers for their poisoned arrows.

Even more numerous than the *Aloe dichotoma* are several species of *Euphorbia*. Schinz, it may be noted, has described the eastern edge of the desert as a Euphorbia-steppe.\* The *E. gummiifera* is, perhaps, the most noticeable plant, and in the Garub region this species abounds. It forms compact bushes, 3 to 6 feet in height, and its grey twigs have rather an unpleasant scent, while they contain an unusually rich supply of milk juice. The *E. cervicornis*, the olifant melkbosch of Little Namaqualand, is found occasionally. A little plant that crouches behind rocks or isolated stones is the dwarf shrublet *Pteronia succulenta*, whose main stem is often bent over at a right angle by the fierce winds as soon as it

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\* Schinz, "South-West Africa," Leipzig, 1894.

pushes its head above the shelter. Other plants, usually forming upright bushes, are here compelled to bend before the strong winds ; notable among these is the *Pituranthus aphyllus*, a leafless umbellifer.

A plant of peculiar interest found among the many species of *Mesembrianthemum* is the *M. rhopalophyllum*, which is remarkable for its highly-specialised window-leaves. "The plant grows embedded in the sand, nothing but the flat, slightly convex apex of each leaf being visible, and even that is covered with more or less sand according to locality. While the leaf itself is fresh green with a rather delicate skin, the exposed part is protected by a thick epidermis and cuticula, and possesses comparatively few stomata. It is through this portion, which has the functions of a window, the leaf receives its light, being thus illuminated

from within. There are five to ten, or even more, leaves to each plant, but nothing appears at the surface except these windows ; they peep out of the sand like the eyes of the sand-lizard or sand-vipers, which often hide themselves in a similar way.” \*

It is very curious to see the short flowers of these plants in the spring, for they grow, apparently, straight out of the sand. Only on investigation are the leaves and stem discovered. The leaves are club-shaped. Nature has evidently chosen this underground mode of existence for the plant in order to protect it against the herbivorous animals. These interesting plants are found only in Africa.

The leaves of the *Augea capensis* are very

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\* “The Flora of South Africa,” Vol. I. Rudolf Marloth.

strong in sap, but the plant is so salty that even the camels will turn away from it. This plant is found in many parts of the Karroo.

An untidy-looking shrublet, the *Sarcocaulon rigidum*, is fairly abundant. A peculiarity of its structure is the sharp-pointed spines, which are specially modified stalks of former leaves. Leaves of vivid green cover these plants in the spring, and at times they are numerous enough to influence the colour of the landscape. Pink flowers appear on them in October.

*The gravel plains.*—The rising plains of the inner Namib, which have an altitude of 1,800 feet, some fifty miles from the coast, are swept by furious sand-laden winds for the greater part of the year. The sea-fogs rarely reach these areas, and, as the rainfall is a negligible quantity, no sign

## THE FLORA OF THE COUNTRY 65

of life may be encountered for many miles, only a vast, monotonous waste of gravel and sand meets the eye. Occasionally one lights upon the typical *Sarcocaulon rigidum*, the Candle-bush or Bushman's candle. This plant has been specially adapted to meet the conditions of the desert, and it is able to defy the hottest sun and the fiercest sandstorms. Layers of corky tissue, impregnated with a mixture of fat, wax, and resin, form the bark. This horny casing is the plant's armour against the attacks of its enemies. It burns steadily like a wax candle with a yellow, smoky flame, even when cut fresh from the ground.

## THE CENTRAL PLATEAU

Beginning with Ovamboland, we find considerable forest tracts of acacia, with giant baobabs, and palms and fig-trees in

the more open park-like spaces. The palm zone is found some distance south of the Kunene. Grasses cover the extensive plains after rains. On the uplands of Damaraland the genus *Acacia* plays an important part in the composition of the flora; in many places it predominates among the bushes and also among the trees.\* With the acacias are found other notable species, including *Combretum primitivum*, and the large *Ficus dammarense*.

The handsome Ana tree, *Acacia albida*, is frequently met with. The mountain valleys have a much more luxuriant vegetation than the hills, since they are watered by the many rivulets that abound after rain.

On the eastern steppes where the country

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\* Pearson, "The Travels of a Botanist in South-West Africa"—*The Geographical Journal*, May, 1910.

is sandy and poor in vegetation, that typical product of the Kalahari desert, the tsama melon, *Citrullus vulgaris*, is found. Both man and beast rejoice in this juicy melon. In its raw state it has remarkable thirst-quenching properties, and when cooked it is a satisfying food. The seeds are oily and very fattening. This fruit often affords the only supply of water for travellers in this dry and dreary region. That queer little plant, known as Uyntjes, a kind of sedge, is also found in this region, and the bulbous roots, not unlike the chestnut in flavour, are used as food by the natives. In the springtime a species of Brunsvigia, or Candelabra flower, sometimes covers large areas of the open country.

Great Namaqualand is not so well wooded or so well watered as Damaraland. The kokerboom is a conspicuous feature

on the hills. North of Warmbad a bush formation is encountered in the vicinity of the dry river beds, with *Acacia dilleensis*, *Cadaba juncea*, shrubby Zygophyllaceæ, *Parkinsonia Africana*, and trees of *Acacia horrida*. Camelthorns (*Acacia Giraffæ*) are numerous on the higher levels. The Twa-gras, or Bushman grass of the Karroo, *Aristida brevifolia*, is a characteristic feature of the vast plains. Even when dry this grass retains its nourishing properties, and a period of two years may pass before it dies. The grey hills that border the Orange River have only a few kokerboom and chips of the *Euphorbia virosa*, and some straggling sickly shrubs of *Bauhinia garipensis*.

## **THE FAUNA OF THE COUNTRY**



## CHAPTER IV

### THE FAUNA OF THE COUNTRY

WHEN first visited by Europeans, South-West Africa was swarmed with game in unusual number and variety, and the land was a veritable hunter's paradise. Lions were a constant source of trouble to travellers even long after the middle of the last century. Elephants roamed the country in big herds, and for some years, in the 'seventies and 'eighties, the trade in ivory from Damaraland was considerable, many thousands of pounds worth being brought to the coast for export each year. The black rhinoceros was common. The rare animal known as the white rhinoceros,

*R. simus*, was also found. As stated in a previous chapter, the first giraffe's skin ever sent to Europe from South Africa came from Great Namaqualand in 1763. The buffalo, the quagga, and the zebra abounded, and the ungainly hippopotamus could often be seen plunging and splashing in the lower reaches of the Orange River. But the larger game has been steadily driven to the north and the north-east, where the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the hippopotamus may still be found among the nobler South African fauna, partly as a result of protective measures adopted by the Government authorities. The Caprivi territory may be regarded as the big game reserve of the country.

Among the beasts of prey the lion is still found, but only on the lonely Kalahari border, in the Kaokoveld, and in the far

## THE FAUNA OF THE COUNTRY 73

north. The leopard, *felis pardus*, commonly called the "tiger," exists in many parts of the country, and is not by any means a pleasant beast to encounter. The beautifully-marked cheetah, *Cynaelurus jubatus*, is sometimes found on the eastern slopes. The red lynx, *felis caracal*, the Dutch "rooikat," with the typical tufted ears and short tail, is fairly numerous. Among the enemies of the stock farmer are several species of jackals; the powerful spotted hyena, *H. crocuta*, the Dutch tiger-wolf; and the destructive African wild dog. The wild dogs hunt in packs, and, as they will pull down anything from a lamb to an eland, they do a great deal of damage.

The antelopes are well represented. The eland, the largest of all antelopes, roams the eastern border districts, with the noble koodoo, *strepsoncerous kudu*, the sable antelope,

*hippotragus niger*; the roan antelope, *hippotragus equinus*; the fierce blue wildebeest or brindled gnu, *connochoetes taurinus*; the handsome oryx, or gemsbok, *oryx gazella*, and occasionally the giraffe. The giraffe and the oryx have also been observed on the western plains, and the zebra exists in the Kaokoveld, north of the Namib.

Large herds of springbuck, *gazella eudorcas*, roam the inner plains of the Namib and the open, treeless country to the east. The Waterbuck, *kobus ellipsiprymnus*, is found in the vicinity of the northern rivers, while the little Damaraland antelope, *nannotragus damarensis*, may be seen at rare intervals in the mountain fastnesses near Omaruru. Among the smaller animals are the fecund steenbuck; the charming little klipspringer, *oreotragus saltator*, the

"chamois of South Africa"; and the solitude-loving duiker, *cephalolopus grimmii*.

In the order Rodentia there are several hares. The Cape hare, *lepus capensis*, an animal a little smaller than the English hare, is found both in open and forest country; the rock here, *lepus saxatilis*, is a little larger, and keeps to the hilly country; the spring hare, *Pedetes capensis*, is really a rodent, and this peculiar creature, which lives in burrows, has a queer kangaroo-like method of progression, using its long bushy tail with great skill. The flesh of all these hares makes good eating.

That strange creature, the ant-bear, or Dutch aard vark, *orycteropus afer*, which lives entirely on ants and termites, is responsible for a good deal of damage caused by its burrowing habits. This animal is confined entirely to Africa.

Among other typical African animals are the porcupine ; the dassie, or rock rabbit, *hyrax capensis*, which very much resembles the guinea-pig in shape ; and one or two species of meercats.

### THE BIRDS

Game birds are fairly numerous. The largest bird is of course the ostrich, which runs wild in many parts of the country. A considerable trade was done in ostrich feathers from Damaraland for many years ; shooting of the birds has been wisely prohibited under the German administration. Ostrich-farming has been attempted on a small scale.

There are several species of bustard, notable among them being the big kori bustard, or Dutch pauuw, *Otis kori*, which sometimes stands as high as 5 feet and

weighs 40 pounds ; and one of the lesser bustards known as knorhaan, *Otis afra*, whose irritating, harsh craak is all too familiar to the South African sportsman when stalking his game. The guinea-fowl represents the pheasant tribe, and these fine sporting birds are very numerous in North Damaraland and parts of Ovamboland. The so-called Namaqua pheasant is really a francolin partridge, while the well-known Namaqua partridge is a sand grouse, *Pteroclorus namaquus*. Soon after sunrise the sand grouse are seen high in the air in immense flocks, coming from all parts of the compass to gather around the *vlei*s or pans where they drink. When hunted in the veld they rise well to the dog and provide excellent sport. It is a much more difficult matter, however, to flush the bustard or the guinea-fowl. Several

species of snipe and quail are found, but they are not numerous.

The wild goose, or Egyptian goose, *Chenalopex agyptiacus*, one of the most edible of the South African game birds, with several species of wild duck, frequent the watercourses. Herons, storks, ibises, flamingos, and spoonbills are among the wading birds; the flamingos are often in large numbers in North Damaraland and Ovamboland.

Eagles and vultures are among the birds of prey, with owls and several species of the hawk family. The Secretary bird, *Serpentarius secretarius*, with its curious quill-like crest of feathers, may sometimes be seen stalking in characteristic solemn fashion among the low bush in search of a little animal or a young snake. Those queer birds, the penguins, with their black

coats and white waistcoats, thickly inhabit the islands off the coast. The gannet, the smaller cormorant, with the penguin, have been protected by the Cape Government on account of their importance as yielders of guano, and immense flocks exist to-day.

Among the smaller birds are the wattled starling, *Dilosphenus carunculatus*, two pratincoles, *Glareola melanoptera* and *G. pratincola*, all locust birds, which pursue their prey high in the air, wheeling and darting and turning in wonderfully attractive fashion ; hoopoes, honey-guides, swifts, woodpeckers, hornbills, and weavers. The honey-guide (*Indicatoridoe*) is a most interesting bird. Its intelligence is as remarkable as its pertinacity, and it will give the sportsman no rest until he has followed the twittering creature to the bees'

nest. The remarkable-looking hornbills, with their huge bills, very soon attract the attention of the traveller. The social weaver, *Philetairus socius*, is famous for its peculiar nest-building habits. The birds are sociable little creatures and live together in colonies of several hundreds. The nest, really a bird city, is generally a huge mass of grass and sticks, cunningly arranged in a camelthorn tree, and is often as big as a small haystack. A colony of 500 birds may sometimes be found in the nest. The entrance is from beneath as a protection against tree snakes, and there are generally several "doors." Inside there are a number of "streets" and "compartments," with individual nests in rows like little homes on each side of a street. The nests are added to year by year, and sometimes they become too heavy for the

branches, with the result that the branches give way and the "city" falls to pieces.

### THE SNAKES

The reptile world is represented by a number of exceedingly venomous snakes, but fortunately they are not numerous, and deaths from snake-bite are of rare occurrence. There is the ferocious cobra, one of the most deadly snakes in South Africa, of which there are several species. Anchietas cobra, *Naja Anchietæ*, attains to an average length of 5 feet, and the well-known Cape cobra, *Naja Flava*, is about the same length. These reptiles are as active as they are venomous.

With the characteristic hood raised and eyes glittering with fierce anger, an enraged cobra is a fearsome sight. A couple of drops of its venom are quite sufficient to

kill a giant. The Ringhals cobra or Spitting snake, *Sepedon haemachates*, is not quite so long as its cousin, but is highly venomous and very ferocious when roused. The name "ringhals" means "ring-neck," and has reference to the whitish band or bands across the throat.

Not only has this reptile the power to inflict a deadly bite with its poison fangs—it is able to spit a stream of venom into the eyes of a person standing some feet away. Dogs and calves are often blinded in this way.

The puff-adder, *Bitis arietans*, is an important member of the viper family. This flat-headed, repulsive-looking creature, with its thick, dark-brown body, is highly venomous and exceedingly dangerous, as it coils up and lies quite still in the open until touched or roused. Although extremely

sluggish in nature, it lunges with amazing rapidity. When its warning hiss is heard a hasty retirement is expedient. Among the other dangerous adders are the Night adder, *Causus rhombeatus*, which lays eggs ; the small Peringuey's adder, *Bitis Peringueyi* ; the queer Hornsman or Horned adder, *Bitis cornuta*, which has two or more erect horn-like scales over each eye, like little horns ; the West African adder, *Bitis gabonica*, which will bury itself in the sand for hours, with only the head visible ; the Berg adder, *Bitis atropos*, which keeps to the mountain regions ; and the Oviparous adder, *Atractaspis bibronii*, which is rarely found, since it burrows in the sand after the manner of the blind burrowing reptiles.

All the snakes mentioned above belong to the front-fanged variety, which are all poisonous. The back-fanged snakes are

more or less poisonous. These include in South-West Africa the Herald or Red-lipped snake, *Leptodira hotamboela*, with a speckled body, glossy head, and red upper lip ; the Whip snake, *Psammophis furcatus*, a thin brown reptile with a brittle tail ; the Spotted Schaapsteeker, *Trimerorhynchus rhombatus*, well-known, too, on the Karroo ; the small Damaraland many-spotted snake, *Rhamphiophis multimaculatus* ; the Dapple-backed sand-snake, *Psammophis notostictus* ; and the Namaqualand sand-snake, *Psammophis trigrammus*.

None of these back-fanged reptiles are to be greatly dreaded ; they will rarely attack a person ; but it is not wise to take liberties with them. Even a snake will turn.

All the solid-toothed snakes are as harmless as worms, and may be freely handled.

## THE FAUNA OF THE COUNTRY 85

Quite a number of these are found in the country. The remarkable egg-eating snake, *Dasypeltis scabra*, has a highly-specialised egg-breaking mechanism. A sawing apparatus in the backbone serves the purpose of teeth. The egg-shell is cast up after the contents have been sucked down. There are several species of the small Coppery snake ; one or two of the House snake, of the genus *Boodon*, often found near dwelling-houses. House snakes can easily be tamed, and they may become more useful than cats, and much less harmful.

The non-venomous python is found occasionally in the rocky valleys. Anchieta's python, *P. anchietæ*, is the only species. This reptile has an average length of about 16 feet, and kills all its victims by constriction. The female python lays her eggs and then hatches them like a broody hen.

The dreaded scorpion is also a habitat of the country. Tortoises are found. Swarms of the migratory locust cause much damage when they descend upon the vegetation. Among the smaller but not less troublesome creatures are the many beetles, spiders, ticks, and mites.

In the coast waters the ungainly seals have their home, and off Cape Cross they are found in very large numbers. Whales are not so numerous as in former years, but several whaling stations are in existence along the shore. Altogether, South-West Africa has an uncommon variety of individuals in the animal world.

## **THE EARLY DAYS**

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## CHAPTER V

### THE EARLY DAYS

THE only use of war, says a cynical writer, is to teach geography. Certainly there are many people in South Africa who a few months ago would have been sorely puzzled to locate Luderitz Bay on the map of Africa. And how many are aware that this islet-studded inlet is a place of considerable historic importance ? It was here, says Theal, that "for the first time Christian men trod the soil of Africa south of the tropic."\*

In 1486 Bartholomew Diaz, the famous

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\* Theal's "History of South Africa" (1486-1691), p. 2.

Portuguese navigator, who was in search of the way to India, stepped ashore from the little fifty-ton ship that had brought him from the Tagus, and gave the bay the name Angra Pequeña, the Little Bay. On Serra Parda, or the Grey Mountain, now Pedestal Point, he set up the first of the three stone crosses erected on the South African coast. It stood there above the dreary waste, a striking landmark, well into the nineteenth century, when vandals from the whaling ships broke it in pieces. Fortunately, considerable fragments of the monument were recovered and conveyed to the South African Museum at Cape Town in 1856.

For some 300 years after the landing of Diaz, South-West Africa remained an Unknown Land, and no one seemed eager to venture into what appeared to be a most

inhospitable region. Early in the nineteenth century a few whaling ships might have been seen off the coast taking heavy toll of the many whales that abounded. Walvis Bay, with its sheltered harbour, became a base for the seamen, and from the few Hottentots who lived in the vicinity the men purchased their supplies of fresh meat.

The first European to cross the Orange River was one Jacobus Coetsee, who proceeded northward from his farm at Picketberg in 1760, with a number of Hottentots, to shoot elephants. He hunted in Great Namaqualand, and while there heard from the Namaquas of a tribe of strange, black people living ten days further north, called the Damrocquas, who had long hair, and wore clothes made of linen cloth. This was the day when queer tales lost nothing in

the telling. On his return Coetsee related what he had heard to Hendrik Hop, a Captain of the Burgher Militia ; Hop reported to Governor Ryh Tulbagh, and offered to conduct an exploring expedition in order to seek out these strange people. Tulbagh had a zeal for knowledge surpassed among the early Governors of the Cape only by the Van der Stels ; he readily acquiesced in the proposal, and in 1761 Hop set out on his adventurous journey with a caravan of no less than fifteen wagons. The expedition was well-equipped, since it included a botanist, a surveyor, a surgeon, who also acted as a mineralogist, and a number of European volunteers, with quite a little army of Hottentots. The journey extended from July 16th, 1761, to April 27th, 1762. It deserves to be remembered as one of the most notable journeys con-

nected with early African exploration. The result is the "New Accounts of the Cape of Good Hope, etc."—one of our earliest books of travel in South-West Africa, an exceedingly rare octavo, published in Amsterdam, both in Dutch and French, in 1778. A German edition was published at Leipzig in 1779.\* The book is the work of several hands : it contains, among other things, the journal of C. F. Brink, the surveyor, the reports of T. Roos and P. Marais, two volunteers, on the native tribes encountered, and some excellent plates depicting such rare animals, as they were then, as the zebra, the gemsbuck, the koodoo, and the gnu.

The party crossed the Orange, passed the hot springs now known as Warmbad,

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\* Mendellssau's "South African Bibliography," Vol. I., p. 185.

pushed along the western base of the Karas Mountains; and penetrated to the borders of Damaraland. Some valuable prizes were secured in the shape of several giraffes, animals that were among the rarities at the time. Governor Tulbagh sent the skin of one of these animals to Leiden, the first of its kind to be sent to Europe from South Africa. Hop did not succeed in reaching the country of the Damrocquas, as he was compelled to turn back owing to the loss of cattle and the failure of water. The Orange River, placed on the map from hearsay by the elder Van der Stel, was now definitely located, and a fair knowledge obtained of the sterile wastes of Great Namaqualand, and the mountainous region that lay to the north.

Lieutenant William Paterson, a gifted botanist and explorer, next reached the

Orange River; in company with Colonel Gordon, the Scotch Commanding Officer of the troops of the Dutch East India Company, and Jacobus van Reenen. "On the 17th of August, 1779," says Paterson, "we launched Colonel Gordon's boat, and hoisted Dutch colours. Colonel Gordon proposed first to drink the States' health and then that of the Prince of Orange and the Company, after which he gave the river the name of the Orange River, in honour of that Prince."\*

Up to this time the river had been known as the Braragul, the name given to it by the elder Van der Stel. We owe a debt to the gallant Gordon, who could hardly have found a more appropriate name for these yellow muddy waters ; and as Pettman

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\* Paterson's "Narrative of Four Journeys," 1789, p. 113.

points out in his "South African Place Names," this is the only royal name in the place names of the period.

Le Vaillant next appears upon the scene. This romantic and picturesque traveller assures us that he journeyed "into the interior parts of Africa in the years 1783, 1784, and 1785," leaving the house of his friend Mr. Slabert, near Saldanha Bay, in the middle of 1783; but, unfortunately, Le Vaillant was much given to romancing, and doubts have been thrown on the authenticity of his journeys. That he travelled somewhere in the regions north of the Orange River, "in search of rare birds and new hordes," "suffering much from the reverberations of the sun," seems clear from his descriptions of the country and people. His many adventures make delightful reading, and he was a wonder-

fully keen observer of objects of natural history.

The quest for gold next led a party into the northern wilds. In 1791 Willem van Reenen set out from his farm on the Elephant River, accompanied by a number of burghers, in the expectation of discovering gold, about the existence of which rumours had reached him. The party passed the farthest point reached by Hop thirty years before, and pushed northward until they probably penetrated into what is now Damaraland. One Peter Brand travelled fifteen days further than the main party, and was the first European to come into contact with the mysterious Damrocquas, the Berg Damaras. These natives had the appearance of Kaffirs, they spoke the Hottentot language, and they lived like Bushmen.

For some months the party remained among the Damaras gleaning information about the various clans. Game was abundant ; they accounted for no less than sixty-five rhinoceroses, six giraffes, and small game without number. What was more important to them, they dug up large quantities of "gold ore," and transported it with much joy to Cape Town. Their chagrin can be imagined when they were assured that the "gold" ore was really copper ore.

But belief in the existence of gold north of the Orange seemed to persist, as in 1793 another party left Cape Town, with Chevalier Duminy as a guide, in the packet *Meermin*, for a bay somewhere up the coast, where a train of wagons, sent overland, was to meet them on landing. The wagons, however, were not at the rendezvous,

so the *Meermin* sailed north until Walvis Bay was reached. Here, in February of 1793, the prospectors set up a stone beacon, engraved on one side with the arms of the States, and on the other with the monogram of the Dutch East India Company. Hottentots were found living along the shore, and Peter Brand sought their guidance for a trek into the interior. He was away about a month; during which time he traversed a portion of the Damara country, and was somewhat surprised to find an abundance of trees and many rich grazing tracts. Elephants, buffaloes, rhinoceroses, lions, and giraffes were numerous, but there were no traces of the desired gold. Pienaar was probably the first European to penetrate into the country from the west coast.

The early years of the nineteenth century

bring us to the beginning of the missionary era in South-West Africa, and we now turn to the missionaries who came to evangelise the heathen inhabitants. These men have played no small part in the political life of South Africa, and the dust of the many controversies in which they were concerned ought not to be allowed to obscure the high value and romance of the early missionary enterprise. As pioneers, explorers, geographers, no less than as philanthropists, they have done a great deal for knowledge.

As early as 1802 the London Missionary Society—that stormy petrel of African Missionary Societies—had its agents north of the Orange River. The brothers Christian and Abraham Albrecht were probably the first Europeans to reside in Great Namaqualand; they founded a mission station at Warm Bath (now Warmbad) in



1807. Warm Bath was so named because of the hot springs found there. Another station was established at Bethany in 1814 by J. Henry Schmelen. Robert Moffat, who was destined to leave his name indelibly impressed on African history, took charge of the Warm Bath station in 1818. At this time Titus Africander, the outlaw Hottentot Chief, was at the height of his career as a marauder and desperado ; a cloud of dust in the distance was sufficient to drive the peaceful tribes that lived along the course of the Orange River frantic with terror, since it might herald the approach of the ferocious raider. Africander came under the benign influence of the missionary, and a complete change of character was effected in him. Acting on a sudden impulse, Moffat took him to Cape Town when on a visit. An immense sensation

was created. The people at the Cape could scarcely credit the fact that this man, once the terror of farmers and natives, was a reformed character. Lord Charles Somerset "expressed his pleasure at seeing thus before him one who had formerly been the scourge of the country," and made him the present of a wagon. Moffat's stay in Great Namaqualand, though brief, was certainly notable.

The agents of the London Missionary Society were withdrawn from the country by 1821, and the Wesleyans appeared on the scene. With their early efforts is bound up one of the most tragic stories of missionary enterprise. William Threlfall, a young minister from Yorkshire, was seeking an opening for philanthropic labours among the Hottentots in the region of Warm Bath in the year 1825. He lay

down to rest upon the ground one night after a long trek ; while he slept his Bushman guide drew near with two accomplices, fell upon the defenceless man, and dealt him blow after blow until he lay dead at their feet.\* William Threlfall is thus the missionary martyr of Namaqualand. In 1834 the only European resident in Great Namaqualand was Edward Cook, who had charge of the Warm Bath station, renamed by Cook Nisbett Bath, in honour of Mr. James Nisbett, a generous supporter of the Mission. He laboured among the Bondelswaarts. Cook was the first white man to take his wife into the wilds of Damaraland. The two people had a most adventurous journey northward to the Windhoek Valley, to Gobabis, and then

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\* Cheeseman's "William Threlfall, the Missionary Martyr of Namaqualand," 1911.

across to Walvis Bay, and they actually had their young children with them. Lions proved a great source of anxiety to Mrs. Cook. The following extract from Cook's journal affords an interesting glimpse of the amenities of travel in those days. "During the night we came across a rhinoceros grazing, the snorting of which frightened our servant girl, who was riding an ox. She threw herself off and ran to take shelter in the wagon. The oxen, being accustomed to be chased by wild beasts, took fright at her screaming, and furiously galloped off. Those who had not heard the rhinoceros thought a lion had attacked us, and the greatest terror prevailed until an ox, getting his leg entangled in the harness, fell, and the wagon was stopped."\*

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\* Cook's "Modern Missionary," 1849, p. 136.

Sir James Alexander was the first traveller to explore the country who possessed the scientific attainments essential to extensive and accurate observation. The Scottish knight journeyed slowly through Great Namaqualand and Damaraland in 1836-7, covering, from the time he left Cape Town till his return, a distance of 4,000 miles. It is rather surprising, in view of what we have recorded, to read in more than one "reliable résumé of the history of the country," that Sir James Alexander "was the first European to explore the unknown land." Even Francis Galton assumes that Alexander was the pioneer. Doubtless Sir James was proud to emphasise the fact "that up to this day the whole of the western region of southern Africa to the north of the Orange River has hitherto remained a blank on our

maps," but it was hardly the unknown land he imagined it to be. Sir James did a good deal of hunting in the country ; he spent some time in the vicinity of Walvis Bay; where the "climate was healthy and good" ; he gathered a large number of zoological and other specimens, many of which were unknown to the world of science, and he gleaned much useful information about the social condition of the Bushmen, Namaquas, and Damaras. He was the first white man to secure an exclusive interview with the headman of the Berg Damaras, who told the knight that he had never before looked upon a white man ; all his people had run away on hearing that such a fearsome creature was approaching. At Warm Bath Sir James "set up his staff to wait for the thunder rains," and while there "took the waters,"

and thereby "set the natives the example of ablution."\*

For a few years after Alexander's visit, Wesleyan missionaries occupied stations in Damaraland, and the Rev. J. Tindall was the first white man to reside at Gobabis, although the Rev. Edward Cook and his wife had spent three months there in 1840; but these stations were at length handed over to the German missionaries who belonged to the Rhenish Missionary Society. With the entry of these men into the country in the 'forties we note the forging of the first link in the chain of events which had its end in the establishment of a German Protectorate.

Francis Galton made a notable journey through the country in 1850-2, in company with the Swedish naturalist and

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\* Alexander's "Expedition of Discovery," 1838.

trader, Charles J. Andersson. Galton proceeded from Walvis Bay through regions hitherto almost unknown into Ovamboland and arrived at a point within seven days of Lake Ngami. He was much pleased with the fertility of Ovamboland and the quiet, sociable disposition of the Ovambo people. His "Narrative of an Explorer in Tropical Central Africa" affords the fullest description of the land and the people. For many years the career of Charles J. Andersson was identified with Damaraland and the adjacent countries. He was the first European to travel across South-West Africa to Lake Ngami. This feat he accomplished in 1853. He discovered the Okavango River, and as a result of his many hunting and trading expeditions added much to our knowledge of the country. His books of travel are richly

instructive and alive with stirring incidents.

The names of travellers and explorers like James Chapman, Thomas Baines, Frederick J. Green, bring us to the 'fifties and 'sixties of the nineteenth century, to what may be termed the closing days of the No Man's Land era. The consideration of the events which led up to the German occupation we leave to another chapter.



**THE LATER  
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**



## CHAPTER VI

### THE LATER HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

THE red tide of war surged backward and forward over the land in the 'sixties, and deeds of appalling cruelty were perpetrated. The Hereros fought to secure their independence from the Hottentots, and they were at length victorious, but a guerilla war again broke out in the 'seventies, and the country was in a state of chronic unsettlement. In 1868 the harassed missionaries connected with the Rhenish Missionary Society, whose stations were either plundered or destroyed during these wars, sent an urgent appeal to the British

Government for intervention and requested that the whole of Hereroland should be "declared British territory, under British protection." The appeal was backed up by Bismarck, but the Secretary of State for the Colonies was "unable to adopt the German views on the subject." Efforts were made, however, to restore peace among the tribes by a special commissioner sent up from the Cape. The matter of annexation was not allowed to rest, and in 1875 the Cape Parliament passed a resolution in favour of the extension of the limits of the Colony so as to include Walvis Bay and as much country inland as it was considered expedient to acquire. With a view to ascertaining the feelings of the native chiefs in Namaqualand and Damaraland, Mr. W. C. Palgrave was sent on a commission of inquiry. He was cordially

received by the chiefs, with whom he made treaties which placed the country under British jurisdiction, and he also arranged that a European magistrate or diplomatic adviser should reside among the people at Okahandja. The missionaries were in hearty agreement, as were the German and Swedish traders. Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor at the Cape, strongly favoured annexation, and urged it upon the Home Government, but all that they would agree to was the acquisition of Walvis Bay with some 400 miles of land around it. Formal possession of this area was taken in 1878. The Guano Islands off the coast, which had enjoyed an odorous celebrity for some time, had been annexed in 1867. Sir Bartle Frere renewed his representations at a latter time, but the British Government still adhered to the opinion that it was

inexpedient to encourage any scheme of extension of territory in South-West Africa.

When war broke out again in 1880 between the Namaquas and the Damaras, Palgrave was recalled from the country where he had resided for a time, and Major Musgrave, who had been acting as diplomatic adviser at Okahandja, was removed to Walvis Bay. This outbreak of hostilities led to correspondence between the British Government and Germany. In a memorandum presented to Earl Granville by the German Ambassador it was stated (and the admission is significant in view of subsequent events) that "since there could be no question as to an independent proceeding on the part of Germany for the protection of life and property of its subjects in those regions," it was the wish of the German Government that "the

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British Government would direct that any measures ordered or intended for the protection of life and property of English subjects might be extended likewise to the German missionaries and traders living there." This drew from the British Government the admission that "Her Majesty's Government could not be responsible for what might take place outside British territory, which only included Walvis Bay, and a very small portion of country immediately surrounding it." That careful note was taken of this reply is evident from later events.

Meanwhile the Berlin *Geographische Nachrichten*, of November 1879, had printed an article by Ernst von Weber in which the writer had made a cogent and powerful plea in favour of a plan for a German Colony in South Africa, and it is not

without significance that, early in 1883, the German Embassy politely inquired of the British Foreign Office whether British protection would be extended to a factory about to be established by a Bremen merchant north of the Orange River at Angra Pequena, intimating that if this could not be done they would do their best to extend to it the same measure of protection which they gave to their subjects in remote places, but without any design to establish a footing in South Africa. This was rather a disturbing inquiry to Earl Derby; probably he called to mind the reply given to a previous question, in which a definite statement as to the extent of British territory had been made, so he immediately communicated with the Cape Government asking if they had any prospect of undertaking control of Angra Pequena.

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in the event of the place being declared British. Unfortunately no reply was forthcoming from the Cape for some months, and the matter dragged on. But it is evident that Germany was not idle: one Vogelsang, acting as agent for Herr F. A. E. Luderitz, the Bremen merchant, landed at Angra Pequena, got into touch with the German missionary at Bethany and Chief Joseph Frederick, produced treaty forms, and soon had the satisfaction of annexing some 200 miles of land around the Bay. In a report of an official visit paid to Angra Pequena in October 1883, on behalf of the British Government, by Captain Church, of Her Majesty's Navy, it is definitely asserted that "it was through the influence of the Rhenish missionary at Bethany that Herr Luderitz obtained this extraordinary purchase of coast land." The

cession is dated 25th August, 1883. So Germany obtained a place in the African sun.

This action on the part of Luderitz was keenly resented by British traders, for Captain Sinclair had obtained on behalf of De Pass, Spence & Co. a cession of the coast territory from Angra Pequena to Baker's Cove from the chief of the Bondelswaarts in 1863, and for twenty years the company had enjoyed undisturbed and undisputed possession of the area. Luderitz, however, assumed proprietary rights.

Germany now made another move in the game. In November 1883 the British Foreign Office was asked by the German Ambassador whether Her Majesty's Government claimed any rights of sovereignty over Angra Pequena and adjacent territory. The reply was made that while Great

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Britain only laid claim to certain specified areas, any claim to sovereignty or jurisdiction by a foreign Power would "infringe their legitimate rights," since the country north of the Orange River had been viewed as a kind of commercial dependency of Cape Colony. But this did not deter Bismarck, who had evidently resolved on a definite course of action. Accordingly he instructed the German Consul at Cape Town to announce that Herr Luderitz and his establishments were under the protection of the German Empire, and the announcement was made on April 25th, 1884. Then the Cape Government woke up. In the following month the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, telegraphed to the Home Government that "Ministers have decided to recommend Parliament to undertake control of the coast-line from the

Orange River to Walvis Bay." Earl Derby also seems to have been aroused about this time, for in June he announced that arrangements would be made for giving protection under the British flag to any persons, German and English, who had duly acquired concessions or established commercial enterprises on the coast-line. In the following month the Cape Parliament passed a resolution in favour of the annexation of the whole coast-line from the Orange River to the Portuguese frontier; but the matter had been too long delayed — the prize had been grasped by other hands; for before the Cape resolutions could reach England a German gunboat had appeared at Angra Pequena, the German flag had been hoisted, and a German Protectorate formally proclaimed.

This was an act of state on the part

of Germany, for the territory was vacant in the eye of International Law. Britain had done nothing to enforce her claims over the territory, though she had ample justification. So early as 1796 Captain Alexander of the *Star* sloop landed at Angra Pequena and "took possession in His Majesty's name by hoisting the King's colours, firing three volleys and turning over the soil." Unfortunately, Great Britain had persistently neglected all opportunities to place the matter beyond reasonable doubt, so there was nothing left for her but to acquiesce in the German expansion with the best grace possible, and a reluctant recognition was given to the German claims, although European Colonial opinion in South Africa recognised the action of Germany as nothing less than an unnecessary and unwelcome intrusion. An

Anglo-German Commission, consisting of Sir Sidney Shippard and a German representative, was appointed to investigate the claims of British subjects who had secured concessions on the coast in the vicinity of Angra Pequena before the German occupation and to discuss the interests of the various parties involved in the annexation. Matters were at length adjusted in a fairly satisfactory manner. The Report of the Commissioners was never published, twenty-five copies only being printed, of which twelve were sent to Berlin, twelve to London, and one was retained by the High Commissioner for South Africa.

In a statement made to the Reichstag on June 23rd, 1884, Bismarck said it was the intention of the Government to issue for Angra Pequena (renamed Luderitz Bay by Herr Luderitz) an Imperial Letter

of protection similar to the Royal Charter granted by England to the East India Company. When defining his colonial policy at a later time he affirmed that it was not to found provinces but "mercantile settlements which would be placed under the protection of the Empire." The subsequent history of South-West Africa affords a striking commentary on what proved to be a characteristic Bismarckian utterance. Unfortunately, Great Britain took the declaration at its face value.

Angra Pequena was but a starting point for large extensions of territory, and German eyes were soon turned in the direction of Damaraland. When rumours of designs on the country reached Cape Town, Mr. W. C. Palgrave was sent to Walvis Bay to make inquiries and to learn what measures, if any, should be taken in order

to protect colonial interests and the rights of Her Majesty's subjects north of the Orange River. On arriving at Walvis Bay Mr. Palgrave was requested by Kamaherero to visit him at Okahandja, and there, without inducement of any kind, the Herero Chief handed the Commissioner a Deed of Cession of Damaraland dated December 29th, 1884, giving "our whole country" over to Great Britain. Mr. Palgrave accepted the cession for transmission to England, but the British Government subsequently declined the offer and stated that it would have no objection to the extension of the German Protectorate "inland as far as the 20th degree of East longitude." Was not Germany a "friendly Power"? Kamaherero then appealed to the Aborigines Protection Society, and stated that he had given his country to

the British in 1876 and in 1884, yet the Germans threatened to seize it and bring war and destruction upon his people. But no help was forthcoming from Great Britain, and accordingly in the following year Germany seized the country.

These developments were viewed with considerable pride in Germany, for the early period of colonisation was characterised by immense national enthusiasm. The perfervid Pan-Germanists and the sword-rattling Chauvinists fanned the flame, and for a time the whole nation was "Colony mad." No consideration whatever was paid to the fact that the newly acquired possessions in South-West Africa had long been widely recognised as British commercial dependencies. Small wonder that the startled colonists in South Africa rubbed their eyes in

amazement at the displays of German high politics.

Among the events which call for brief notice during this period mention must be made of a characteristic Boer trek which took place from the Transvaal into Damaraland in 1873. A party of farmers journeyed with their families and stock across the waterless wastes of the Kalahari Desert to seek out a new home. They endured the most horrible sufferings and their line of march was a line of the graves of their dead. A relief expedition went up from Cape Town to their assistance in 1879, and some 300 of them were found in great straits in North Damaraland. They subsequently trekked into Portuguese territory.

In 1885 W. W. Jordan, a trader, attempted to establish a Republic in South Ovamboland. He purchased land from a

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Chief, cut it up into farms, secured the co-operation of a few other Europeans, established a Council and named the area Upingtonia in honour of Sir Thomas Upington, the Cape politician ; but in the following year Jordan was murdered by natives, and the " Republic " came to an end.



## **THE GERMAN OCCUPATION**



## CHAPTER VII

### THE GERMAN OCCUPATION

DURING the early years of the German occupation the seat of Government was at Otjimbingue, where Dr. Goering, the Imperial Commissioner, had a handful of soldiers to assist him in the work of administration. In 1890 K. von Francois was appointed Commissioner and Military Commander, and as the few troops in the country had been reinforced, he proceeded to seize the territory around Windhoek, and two years later the first settlers from Germany arrived to make their homes at Windhoek, destined to be the new capital. Francois set about the task of subjugating

the natives in typical Prussian fashion, and apparently adopted a policy of colonisation by the Mauser. In 1893 he stormed the stronghold of Hendrik Witbooi, the Hottentot leader, and the country was forthwith plunged into prolonged and costly wars. Even after Witbooi's defeat other tribes carried on a most harassing guerilla campaign. In 1904 the Bondelswaarts rose, and in the following year the Hereros revolted. The farms of white settlers were devastated, and men and women were cruelly murdered, but, significantly enough, British and Boer farmers were not molested. In 1904, General von Trotha, who had done his utmost to suppress the rising, greatly exasperated at the failure of many of his "drives," entered on a campaign of extermination. He issued a proclamation in which it was stated that "within the

German border every Herero, with or without a rifle, with or without cattle, will be shot." The record of the period which followed is a most sanguinary one. Thousands of Hereros were destroyed, and thousands more were driven out into the parched desert wastes, where they died of thirst, and where for several years after long lines of white bones lay bleaching in the sun, marking the track the stricken people had tried to follow across the wilderness. In "Peter Moor," a narrative of the campaign written by a German soldier, some significant sidelights are thrown on the methods adopted in this campaign. Dealing with one incident the writer describes the foodless, waterless condition of the country, and how the soldiers stealthily surrounded a party of the enemy, men, women and children; and he

proceeds: "We then led the men away to one side and shot them. The women and children, who looked pitifully starved, we hunted into the bush." It is said that no less than 40,000 Hereros were destroyed in these wars.

Probably very few natives would have been left alive in the country had von Trotha been permitted to continue his work of destruction, but the repeal of his famous proclamation was ordered by Bismarck, and he was superseded by Herr von Lindequist in 1905. Von Lindequist issued a general amnesty to the Hereros, and wisely set aside reserves for those who surrendered. This conciliatory policy had an instant effect on the Hereros; but the Hottentots continued the struggle until 1907. The land of the Hereros was appropriated by the Government and made fiscal domain.

The campaign was a costly one for Germany, since it involved the loss of many hundreds of lives and an expenditure of some £30,000,000. At the height of the campaign there were 19,000 Germans in the field, with a large number of Dutch auxiliaries responsible for the transport arrangements.

There is no doubt that the main causes of the native risings were the bureaucratic methods of the colonial administration and the behaviour of the white traders. "Germany has nothing to learn from England," said the colonial party's official organ in Africa at the beginning of the enterprise, "or any other colonising nation, having a method of handling social problems peculiar to the German spirit." Beginning in this temper, it is hardly a matter for surprise that their policy in

South-West Africa has been marked by all the defects of the "German spirit."

They failed utterly to appreciate the significance of the fact that England had achieved her success as a great colonising Power by adopting the twin principles of liberty and diversity in her dealings with subject or conquered races. With characteristic arrogance the Germans proceeded to apply the typical Prussian principles of compulsion and uniformity to all their methods of administration, and the "mailed fist" became the most appropriate symbol of German colonial rule. A ready-made system of Prussian bureaucracy was established; Berlin and Potsdam had their replicas on a small but exact scale in the little settlements where officialism flourished, and the cast-iron rules "made in Germany" were applied to the peculiarly

flexible problems of colonial administration. The "system" was infallible! It had wrought miracles with home administration. It had only to be applied in Africa, and it would inevitably work the miracle of colonisation. Little regard was paid to native customs and traditions of life. Officialism rode roughshod over the ancient ways of life, tribal laws, and native susceptibilities in a manner that aroused the keenest resentment among the people. In a word the attempt was not to colonise but to Germanise.

"We started with a wrong conception of colonial possibilities," said Professor Bonn, of Munich University, in a striking address before the Royal Colonial Institute on "German Colonial Policy," early in 1914. "We wanted to concentrate on Africa the emigrants we were losing at

the beginning of the colonial enterprise. We wanted to build up on African soil a new Germany and create daughter states as you have done in Australia and in Canada. We carried this idea to its bitter end. We tried it in South-West Africa and produced a huge native rising, causing the loss of much treasure and many lives. We tried to assume to ourselves the functions of Providence, and we tried to exterminate a native race whom our lack of wisdom had goaded into rebellion. We succeeded in breaking up the native tribes, but we have not yet succeeded in creating a new Germany."

Worse still, some of the officials sent out were guilty of excesses and crimes which left a most evil odour. There were not wanting, of course, men who brought to their posts a sense of public duty and a

high standard of personal honour, but "stories of slavery, violence, cruelty, illegality, and lust, committed both by officials and planters, were sent home too frequently by missionaries and clean-handed men in the colonial service, who could not see these things and be silent, and disciplinary proceedings at home generally confirmed the imputations of report, and frequently proved that the half had not been told." \*

Among the traders there was little or no sense of obligation towards the native races ; their policy was entirely one of exploitation. No stronger words of condemnation of the ill-treatment of the people have been written than those which have come from German writers. At the time of the Herero insurrection the *Cross Gazette*

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\* Dawson's "The Evolution of Modern Germany," p. 370.

stated : " Unscrupulous traders have been allowed to exploit the inexperience and the recklessness of the Hereros. The debts contracted with the white traders had enormously increased during recent years, while villages had mortgaged their cattle and their entire land with their creditors."

A white resident who wrote home from Outjo did not hesitate to affirm that " most of the white traders are said to have been murdered, and in their fate one can only see a not unjustifiable act of vengeance on the part of the natives, who have avenged the unscrupulous outrages and plundering of the traders. The traders plundered the natives systematically. Every one took what he wanted."

Pastor Meyer, a missionary, stated that " the traders took from the Hereros their land, though they had paid their debts four

or five times over, since no receipts were given, and 400 per cent. was charged."

In 1904, Herr Schlettwein, a Government expert who has had the honour of being called in to instruct the members of the Budget Committee of the Reichstag on the principles of colonisation, wrote in a pamphlet a characteristic German exposition of the policy of "frightfulness" as applied to the colonies. "In colonial politics," states this disciple of Nietzsche and Bernhardi, "we stand at the parting of the ways—on the one side the aim must be healthy egoism and practical colonisation, and on the other exaggerated humanitarianism, vague idealism, irrational sentimentality. The Hereros must be compelled to work and, to work without compensation and in return for their food only. Forced labour for years is only a just punishment, and at the same time it is the

best method of training them. The feelings of Christianity and philanthropy with which the missionary works must for the present be repudiated with all energy."

These words are a sufficient commentary on an emphatic statement made in the Speech from the Throne with which the Reichstag was opened sixteen years before, when colonial enthusiasm was at fever heat, when it was affirmed that it must be a solemn duty of the Empire to "win the Dark Continent for Christian civilisation."

The use of force as the method of civilisation has had its inevitable result on the natives. In some districts it is not safe for a German to venture to-day, and no German settler who valued his life would presume to make a home anywhere near these areas without the protection afforded by the presence of armed soldiers. There

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has also been a steady exodus of Hereros into British territory for many years, for, as one of the Hereros wrote to his kinsmen, "the land of the English is a good land."

The Ovambos were never conquered. As recently as July of 1914, the Luderitzbucht newspaper, the *Luderitzbuchter Zeitung*, stated: "If you were to tell an Ovambo despot in the far north that he was under German protection, he would laugh himself to death." The mailed fist is a poor coloniser.

Herr Dernburg, the versatile ex-general manager of the Dresden Bank, who was appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1907, made a determined attempt to cleanse the Augean stables of administrative irregularity, and initiated many useful measures of reform. In 1908 he paid a visit of inspection to South-West Africa, and the

years which followed his tour saw considerable progress. There is something more than irony in the fact that when war broke out Germany was beginning to profit by the lessons learned in the hard school of experience, and had peace continued, slow but certain progress would have been witnessed. On South-West Africa, in annual subsidies, administrative expenses, and warlike operations, it is estimated that Germany has spent nearly £50,000,000.

Officialism has been the bane of the country ; the whole system of government has been altogether too elaborate and costly. At one time every third male adult was an official, and, apparently, the main occupation of these men was the compilation of voluminous records of all that pertained to the life of the civilians. Even the German settlers have been moved to protest at times

against the petty restrictions imposed upon them by the dominant military caste. Taxes have been heavy ; little encouragement has been given to the prospector ; favouritism has been manifest in the apportioning of land ; persistent attempts have been made to Germanise the non-Germans, notably the Dutch settlers, and the whole population has been weighed down with a burden of ordinances and regulations altogether out of proportion to the needs of a young colony.

The local government was vested in a Council of forty members, which had advisory functions only. The Governor, appointed by the Kaiser, had the supreme authority. Twenty members were elected by the Districts, and twenty were nominated by the Governor. All bills were first submitted to the Governor, and only such

measures as had been laid before him, or suggested by him, could be passed into law.

Protests against such autocratic rule for a young country were numerous, and many appeals were made for a more representative form of government, but all were in vain. The "system" could not be weakened, and the last of the German Governors kept it inviolate to the end.

#### **GERMAN INTRIGUE IN AFRICA**

The recent rebellion within the Union of South Africa may be viewed as the culminating point of forty years of intrigue in South Africa, for German emissaries have been at work in the country seeking to undermine British authority since the 'seventies of the last century.

"Would to God," exclaimed Karl Mauch, the traveller and explorer, on his return to

Germany from the Transvaal in 1873, "that this fine country might soon become a German colony." A year or two later Bismarck was urged by Germans in the country to send a "steady stream of Germans through Delagoa Bay to secure future domination over the Transvaal, and so pave the way for a great German Empire in Africa." When in 1884 the German flag was hoisted over Angra Pequena the perfervid Treitschke went into ecstasies of delight. This was but a beginning to the advocate of a greater Germany. He postulated a "natural tendency for a Teutonic population to take over South Africa," and painted in rosy colours a picture of a great confederation of German possessions in Africa. South-West Africa was regarded as a *point d'appui*; its real value lay in its proximity to the coveted lands in the possession of the

"dis-affected" Boers. With his usual pre-science Sir Bartle Frere saw the danger, and warned the Boers that "the little finger of Germany might be heavier than the loins of the British Government." When the Anglo-Boer war broke out a Press campaign was inaugurated in Germany in favour of the "downtrodden Boers," and it is highly probable that the Kaiser's famous telegram sent to President Kruger after the Jameson raid was not the impulsive message it was thought to be at the time, but part of a carefully planned scheme of conspiracy against England.

As far back as July of 1895, *Die Grenzboten*, an important political weekly published in Berlin, wrote as follows: "For us the Boer States, with the coasts that are their due, signify a great possibility. Their absorption in the British Empire would

mean a blocking-up of our last road towards an independent agricultural colony in a temperate climate." The same newspaper wrote two years later : " The possession of South Africa offers greater advantages in every respect than the possession of Southern Brazil. If we look at the map, our German colonies appear very good starting points for attack." In the same year the following appeared in the *Koloniales Jahrbuch* : " The importance of South Africa as a land which can receive an unlimited number of white immigrants must rouse us to the greatest exertions in order to secure there the supremacy of the Teuton race. The greater part of the population of South Africa is of Low German descent. We must constantly lay stress upon the Low German origin of the Boers, and we must, before all,

stimulate their hatred against Anglo-Saxon-dom."

More remarkable still is the speech made in the Reichstag by the unsentimental Herr Lattman, when discussing the railway line from Luderitzbucht to Keetmanshoop. "The line," he boldly stated, "is not of very great importance for the transport of war material or for commercial purposes, but it gives us the solution of a much more important problem, namely, the position of the colony if war should break out between us and Great Britain. In this case the line would facilitate considerably our attack on Cape Colony."

That a Pan-German propaganda has been carried on in South Africa for some time is now evident, and, as recent events have made abundantly clear, the seduction of men of "Low German descent" from their

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allegiance to the Union Government, was a main part of the propaganda. Happily, the majority of the Dutch Africanders were too wise to attach any importance to the specious promises of a Republic, and with their fellow citizens of British extraction they have played an honourable part in the breaking up of the German rule in South-West Africa.



**THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY**



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY

#### THE NATIVE RACES

THE native races represented in South-West Africa are the Bushmen, Hottentots, and Bantu people, and they vary not only in physical appearance and language, but also in character and habits.

The Bushmen, so-called because of their preference for places abounding in bushes, were probably the earliest inhabitants of the land, since members of this race roamed the entire country south of the Zambesi at a time of remote antiquity. These people were nomads of a most primitive type, and lived on wild animals, wild plants

and fruits, the roots of plants, locusts, and even the larvæ of ants. Small in stature, yellowish brown in colour, with queer, fox-like face, slender limbs, and a language abounding in strange clicks and deep guttural sounds, the Bushman did not seem far removed from the animals upon whom he preyed. The people lived in small societies after a most primitive fashion, with no religion, and no fixed abode. Though incapable of protracted labour, they possessed marvellous keenness of vision and fleetness of foot, and could travel immense distances in pursuit of game without taking rest. Savages though they were, they had artistic gifts of no mean order: on the walls of caves and the sheltered sides of great rocks in various parts of the country there are found to-day rude but spirited and clever pictures in

profile of wild animals, in red, and yellow and black. But they have been so ruthlessly hunted down and destroyed by successive intruding races, that these keen-eyed children of the wilds have almost entirely disappeared from the vast territory which at one time was their exclusive hunting-ground. Some of them linger yet on the Kalahari border, and some thousands of half-breeds are found in the districts of Grootfontein, Outjo, and Gobabis.

How and whence the Hottentots came no one can say with certainty. Some affirm that their origin is to be sought in the intermarriage of men of light brown or yellow colour with women of Bushmen blood, while others incline to the view that they came from North Africa somewhere about the end of the fourteenth century. Compared to the Bushmen they

are but recent dwellers in the land. They called themselves the Khoi-Khoi, or men of men, and they probably travelled slowly southward and westward, dispossessing the Bushmen of their lands here and there, until they covered considerable areas of the country. They were small men, but greatly superior to the Bushmen both in physique and intellect. They lived in tribes under hereditary chiefs, but the chief's authority was very limited. On the whole they were a good-natured sort of people, merry, thoughtless, and indolent. Various tribes of Namaqua Hottentots roamed over the southern portion of South-West Africa for many years prior to the German occupation. They had an abundance of horned cattle, sheep, and goats, and most of their rather frequent tribal conflicts were about flocks and herds.

Their descendants have shown themselves capable of adopting civilised habits of life, and they have learned to cultivate the soil, and even to act as rough handicraftsmen. More pure Hottentots are found in Great Namaqualand to-day than in any other part of South Africa. When the last census was taken a year or two ago they numbered some 15,000. Until brought under German rule, after the various unsuccessful conflicts which they waged against the Germans, they enjoyed a life of independence.

To the great Bantu family, or Kaffir races, belong the Ovahereros, or Damaras—better known as Hereros—and the Ovambo people, but there are well marked distinctions between these two neighbours. The name Herero, it is said, is an attempt to reproduce the whirring sound of the

broad-bladed assagai used by these people in its flight through the air. "The meaning of the name Ovaherero," says G. W. Stow, "is the men of the whirring assagais." The Hereros migrated from the north or north-east, and for some time they occupied the territory north of the Namaquas, living in communities under the government of chiefs. Their riches consisted of cattle, and they have always shown a great reluctance to part with any of their animals. Among early travellers they won an unenviable notoriety on account of their cruelty, filthy habits, and degenerate tastes. In their conflicts with the German forces they revealed remarkable and unexpected powers of resistance. About 15,000 to 20,000 of these people are found in the country at present.

The Ovambo people in the far north were

practically unknown until the 'fifties of the last century, when travellers discovered them to be a rich, industrious, and hospitable tribe, skilled in the working of metals, and possessed of a real love for agriculture. They live under a fairly strict tribal government in large communities, and for some time have carried on trade with the Portuguese; they have even supplied such articles as knives and iron pearls to their southern neighbours, the Hereros. It is estimated that there are at least 80,000 of these people in the northern territory, while the total population of Ovamboland and the Caprivizipfel may be anything between 150,000 and 200,000.

The Bergdamaras, who for many years inhabited the mountainous district of Western Damaraland, constitute a fascinating ethnological problem. They are Bantu

by blood, Hottentot by language, and Bushmen by habit. Whence these strange affinities?

It is probable that the Bergdamaras were at one time connected with the main stream of Bantu people that spread southward over the country, but who by an eddy in the tide were left stranded in what is now Damaraland. Enslaved there by the more powerful Hottentots, they adopted the enemy's language, and at length escaped from bondage to make their home in the fastnesses of the mountains, where no other means of subsistence remained for them but that of the Bushmen. They number about 18,000 to-day.

South-West Africa presents then a deeply interesting microcosm of native life, and affords glimpses of the migratory movements of the native people in far-off days.

There are the Bushmen, the descendants of the aboriginal hunters who dwelt in the land unknown ages ago ; the Hottentots, who are the sons of the yellow-skinned people that intruded into the hunting-grounds of the pigmy Bushmen ; the Bergdamaras, who probably represent the pioneer tribes of the virile black-skinned races that early followed upon the trail of the yellow-skins ; while in the Ovambos are exhibited some of the best traits of the most advanced native tribes in the whole country.

The number of natives actually counted when the census was taken in 1913 was 69,003, but the total estimated native population, excluding Ovamboland and the Caprivizipfel, was 78,810. A few thousands of the Ovambos have been attracted to the mines, but the Hottentots, Bergdamaras,

and Hereros find employment on the farms and as domestic servants. About 2,500 natives from the Cape work as labourers at the diamond fields.

### THE WHITE PEOPLE

In the year 1880 the white population of South-West Africa consisted of 300 trek-Boers and 150 Europeans in Damaraland, and a dozen whites at Walvis Bay : in 1900, that is, six years after the German annexation, there was a total white population of 3,388, made up of 2,146 men, 452 women, and 790 children. The last census, taken on January 1st, 1913, showed a total population of 14,830. Including the 1,819 members of the military forces, the males numbered 10,147, the females 4,683, and the children 1,625. There was an increase of 250 women against the preceding year,

and this is a healthy sign, since it goes to show that existence is becoming more stable in the colony, and that social conditions are improving.

The Windhoek district has the largest population, as it claims 2,871 people; Luderitzbucht is second with 1,616; Swakopmund third with 1,463; Karibib has the fourth place with 1,170; while Keetmanshoop is not far behind with 1,155.

The nationality of the population was, of course, largely German; there were only 272 Englishmen, but there were 1,630 "other British subjects." The percentage of other nationalities to the population was very small.

There has been a slow but steady increase in population since the close of the native wars in 1906; but the increase is small in proportion to the size of the country;

it should be noted, however, that the many native wars have had a most unsettling effect for years, and only a comparatively brief period has elapsed since they were brought to a close. There is no doubt that colonists will find their way to the country in increasing numbers in the near future, for the large areas in the central region constitute a fine "white man's country."

Up to the present the land has only claimed the labours of 24 per cent. of the adult males, while the commercial community has been responsible for 18 per cent., and "other professions" no less than 45 per cent.

It is evident that mining activities have absorbed the energies of the great number of whites, and that the farming profession has not yet been brought into

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the position of prominence that it must have before permanent success can be assured to the country.

It is somewhat surprising to learn that of 2,368 adult females, only 1,761 were married. Boys and girls exist in about equal numbers.

The majority of the people are Protestants in religion; Roman Catholics number 17 per cent., while "other religions" claim 2 per cent.



**THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY**



## CHAPTER IX

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY

IT must not be concluded from what has been written about the blunders of the colonial administration in dealing with the native people that little or nothing has been done in the way of developing the country's resources, for many solid achievements stand to the credit of Germany.

While many and grievous mistakes have been made, it must be remembered that success in the difficult sphere of colonial enterprise rarely, if ever, comes save with experience. To provide in South-West Africa a home for German emigrants and a

market for German trade, considerable effort and large sums of money have been expended, and that success is not more marked is partly due to the fact that so much energy has been devoted to warlike operations rather than to the task of colonisation.

For purposes of administration the country was divided into fifteen districts (excluding Ovamboland and the Caprivizipfel), Grootfontein, Omaruru, Outjo, Okahandja, Karibib, Windhoek, Gobabis, Rehoboth, Gibeon, Maltahoehe, Bethanien, Keetmanshoop, Warmbad, Luderitzbucht, and Swakopmund. There are no very large towns in existence, but the few small towns and villages compare very favourably with those of similar size in the Union of South African, while several of them are considerably in advance as regards public

buildings and modern improvements. The principal towns are Windhoek, Swakopmund, Luderitzbucht, and Keetmanshoop. Windhoek has a picturesque situation in the best part of the territory, 180 miles from Swakopmund in a direct line. As the seat of Government and the military headquarters, it has long been the most important town in the country. About a thousand Europeans resided here, and 800 natives. The principal thoroughfare is a wide street nearly two miles in length. There are substantial churches, a park, a public library, a museum, Government buildings, clubs, fort, barracks, a fine marble monument to the soldiers who perished in the native wars, and the inevitable brewery. Houses nestle among the trees in pleasing fashion, and there are many well-cultivated gardens.

Swakopmund, at the mouth of the Swakop River, is the principal port, and for some years it has been the busiest town in the country, but it has a poor harbour, lying as it does on the open Atlantic seaboard. Immense sums of money have been spent in order to provide good landing accommodation, but Swakopmund has too many natural disadvantages to make it a safe and satisfactory harbour. Thousands of tons of sand are deposited yearly in the bight by the Benguella current, and the pounding of the big Atlantic waves would destroy any but the strongest and most massive jetty. A new jetty was nearing completion when the war broke out. Some very fine Government buildings have been erected, as well as hospitals and churches and business establishments ; the streets are wide, with wood-paved footpaths, and

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the town has an air of solidity and neatness quite unusual to a young colonial township.

But the natural entry into the country is the spacious and sheltered harbour at Walvis Bay, twenty-five miles to the south of Swakopmund, which though undeveloped has enormous possibilities as a naval base, and a port for the hinterland. A good railway from Walvis Bay to Swakopmund will go far to solve the problem of the future of a town which is a good monument to German industry and enterprise.

Luderitzbucht was formerly nothing more than a dilapidated trading station for the interior, but with the discovery of diamonds in the vicinity the settlement grew into a town with almost magical swiftness. It had a white population of 800 in 1914. Many substantial and even handsome buildings have been erected. The town has a

fine harbour, an electric power station, a powerful plant for condensing sea-water, and a good telephone system, but the roads are merely tracks in the sand, and when the wind blows; as it often does, the sand is everywhere, indoors and out. Goggles are a necessity for every one.

Keetmanshoop was the capital of the southern territory, and was important on account of its position as a military headquarters. The town is small, but well laid out, and has a church, a Government school, a number of hotels, stores, and some neat residences.

Other centres of population, of more or less importance, are Karibib, some 125 miles from Swakopmund, a busy railway centre, which has grown very rapidly since 1901 ; Omaruru, about 150 miles from Swakopmund, with rich grazing lands ; Okahandja,

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north of Windhoek, noted for its good water supply ; Gobabis, the chief town on the eastern border ; Grootfontein, in North Damaraland, founded by Boer settlers in the 'eighties of the last century ; Tsumeb, the centre of the valuable copper mining industry ; Outjo, a military station in the Kaokoveld ; Bethanien and Warmbad, old mission stations in Great Namaqualand ; and Gibeon, the centre of some good farm lands.

Recent years have seen marked progress throughout the country, mainly owing to the extension of the railways. It is true that the railways have been built with a view to their strategic importance, and altogether in advance of the population, but they have been a most important factor in increasing the economical value of the territory. A line from Swakopmund,

managed by the Otavi Mining and Railway Company, connects the port with the copper mining districts at Otavi and Tsumeb, and is some 419 miles in length. It is of approximately two-foot gauge. A branch extends from Otavi to Grootfontein. A second railway, managed by the State, extends from Swakopmund almost parallel with the narrow-gauge line to Karibib, then curves south to Windhoek, from which place it proceeds due south to Keetmanshoop and Kalkfontein.

From Luderitzbucht a line of the standard South African gauge, 3 feet 6 inches, worked by the Lenz Company, has been laid to Keetmanshoop via Seeheim, so all the important districts have been linked up. A branch line, 66 miles in length, runs parallel with the coast, from Kolmanskuppe to Bogenfels, and intersects diamondiferous

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country practically all the way. The locomotives on this line are driven by electricity generated on the engines. In all there are some 1,400 miles of railways, 780 of which are narrow gauge, while the rest are of Cape gauge.

Kalkfontein is 172½ miles from Upington, in the Cape Province, and since the war broke out the two places have been linked up by rail as a result of magnificent record construction work by the engineers and men of the Union Railways. From De Aar to Windhoek it is now 876 miles by rail, and 1191 from Luderitzbucht to Johannesburg.

Roads have been improved between some of the larger centres of population, but in many places they are nothing more than mere tracks across the country. In regard to the telegraph and telephone service, the

colony is well in advance of many parts of the Union of South Africa, since many of the farm settlements are linked up with the villages and towns, and many of the military stations and police posts are similarly joined. At Windhoek, a high-power wireless station, consisting of five towers, 360 feet high, was erected in 1914, to form a link in the chain of stations between Germany and her overseas possessions, stretching from Nauen to East Africa. Wireless stations were also erected at Swakopmund and Luderitzbucht. There are seventy post offices in the country, and fifty of these are also telegraph offices. The schools for European children have increased of late, but the medium has been compulsory German, even for the children of the Dutch settlers. Numerous wells have been sunk, dams made, irrigation work undertaken;

and it is estimated that in addition to the natural springs, there are now 1,613 wells, 130 dams, and 59 water-boring holes. The Windhoek district is favoured with no less than 12 springs, 231 wells, 35 dams, and 20 water-boring holes.

Trade has shown some advance, and the traffic of the two ports has steadily increased. In 1913 the imports were valued at £2,171,200, and they consisted mainly of foodstuffs, liquors, coal, building materials, textiles, galvanised iron, and rails. No less than 81 per cent. of the imports came from Germany, while less than 1 per cent. came from England, and about 12 per cent. from British South Africa. Far more coal came from Germany than from the coalfields of South Africa. The exports for 1913 were valued at £3,515,100, but the diamond production was responsible for no less than

£2,945,975. Other exports were copper, £396,436; tin, £31,568; wool, £5,500; cattle, small stock, meat, hides, skins, and ostrich feathers. Germany received 83 per cent. of the articles.

The finances of the colony show improvement. The revenue, accruing mostly from railways, harbours, and taxes on minerals, showed a surplus for 1913; and in budgeting for the year 1915, revenue and expenditure were estimated to balance at £2,081,157. Public works of some importance were contemplated for 1914-15.

### MINERALS

One of the immediate results of the German occupation was an influx into the country of mining prospectors who were eager to secure concessions. Mineral rights over large areas were bought from native

chiefs, and prospecting was actively carried on. The concessions were in many instances transferred to third and sometimes fourth parties, until at length the mining rights of the whole country were held by the following: The Deutsche Kolonial Gesellschaft, the Kaoko Land und Minen Gesellschaft, the South-West Africa Company, the Otavi Minen und Eisenbahn Gesellschaft, the Hanseatische Land und Minen Gesellschaft, the Gibeon Schuerf und Handels Gesellschaft, the South African Territories Company, and the Government. For some years each of these parties kept to its own laws, which regulated or prohibited prospecting operations. The Government recognised the need for greater uniformity, and in 1913 the various companies, with the exception of the South-West Africa Company, entered into agreements with

the Government. The royalties payable to the different companies were fixed by these agreements.

Next to the valuable diamond fields, the copper mines rank in importance. The rich deposits in the Otavi district were known to South Africans some years before the German occupation. They were worked by the Bushmen, who quarried and smelted the metal, using as a flux the ash of a tree, and by the Ovambos, who adorned themselves with heavy copper ornaments. The fine outcrop at Tsumeb was discovered in 1892. The Otavi Company is a German concern with issued capital which has been fully paid up in cash, of £1,000,000 in 200,000 £5 shares. The Company took over from the South-West Africa Company 1,000 square miles of mining rights and 500 square miles of freehold rights contained

therein, in order to work the group of copper mines in the Otavi area, but by virtue of its shareholding the South-West Africa Company holds an interest in the Otavi Company of about 55 per cent. This holding is the chief asset of the South-West Africa Company. The ore mined is divided into a high-grade copper product, principally copper glance, which has been exported to America, and lead ores, largely galena, and low-grade carbonate copper ores, which have been smelted at the mine. Since the completion of the Company's railway from Swakopmund in 1908, the yearly output has averaged 36,000 tons. Other deposits are found at Grootfontein, Grossotavi, and Gochab, while recent discoveries include finds in the Bobos Mountains in the Tsumeb district, and at Okatumba, north-east of Windhoek. The Khan mine has been

opened up to a considerable depth, and development work was proceeding in other promising mines when war was declared.

### TIN

Large deposits of tin ores have been found, mostly in alluvial deposits, situated in the neighbourhood of outcrops of pegmatite and quartz, which occur in the hinterland of Swakopmund.

### MARBLE

There are immense layers of good quality marble in the Karibib district. The quarrying rights are held by the Afrika-Marmor-Kolonial Gesellschaft.

Gold has been found at several places in the South-West Africa Company's territory, and occasional nuggets have been unearthed in the Neineis tinfields, but as yet there are no discoveries of the precious

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ore in payable quantities. Coal has not been found.

### AGRICULTURE AND LIVE STOCK

There is a surprisingly small proportion of the land of the country under cultivation, since only 13,000 acres have been treated. Four-tenths of this total is in the well-watered Grootfontein district, while the Windhoek region has another three-tenths. Mealies, potatoes, lucerne, vegetables and melons are the principal articles grown, but a good beginning has been made with fruit and tobacco.

There are 1,330 farms, and they cover an area of over 32,000,000 acres; they vary in size from 6,000 to 50,000 acres. In 1913 they carried 205,643 cattle, 53,691 woolled sheep, 17,171 Persian sheep, 472,585 Afrikander sheep, 485,401 goats,

13,340 Angora goats, 18,163 half-bred Angoras, 15,916 horses, 13,618 mules and donkeys, 7,772 pigs, 709 camels, and 1,507 ostriches. All these figures, with the exception of those relating to the camels, show a considerable increase on the preceding year, and while they may be of no value in estimating the quantity of stock in the country at the close of the war, on account of the inevitable slaughter following on a siege, they serve to show how much advance has been made in pastoral development, in spite of the rinderpest of 1896-7, the droughts of more recent years, and diseases such as anthrax and lamziekte.

Great improvements have been made in the stock since the German occupation. The cattle owned by the natives, while hardy and useful, were of little value as sources of milk, and the meat was of an inferior

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quality. Goats and fat-tailed sheep were the other animals possessed by the natives. But the Germans have imported stock of the best quality and of every description.

Cattle and horses have come from Germany and the Argentine, Karakul sheep from Russia, merino sheep from Australia, and Angora goats from Cape Colony. Animals purchased abroad by farmers have been imported at the expense of the Government, and considerable encouragement given to stock-rearing. Much good work was expected from an Agricultural Advisory Board organised at the end of 1913, and a staff of Government experts had been collecting information on such matters as water laws, fencing rights, and animal diseases; these experts were to have assisted the members of the Board in drafting useful measures. A Land Bank

with a capital of £500,000 was established in 1913, and some advances were made to farmers in the following year. The object of the Bank was to supply the farmer with capital at a reasonable rate of interest under a bond which could not be called up as long as the interest and other charges were duly paid, and to provide easy terms for repayment of the principal. The Bank was also expected to assist in providing fresh capital for effecting farm improvements, making the increased value of the farm security for the advances made, to foster the establishment of co-operative societies for the sale of produce and the purchase of certain articles in bulk. It would appear that the first grants were made to the farmers in one particular area, and the farmers in other parts were highly incensed at what they affirmed to be favouritism.

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Shortly before the war broke out the Bank was notified from Berlin that the proposed remittance of one and a half million marks for advances had been cancelled.

Among other industries are those connected with sealing, guano export, whaling, and brewing. The export value of seal skins has averaged about £2,000 per year for several years, but in 1913 little profit was made by the sealers on account of the low price received for the skins. Whaling has not yet been a great success. The breweries at Windhoek and Swakopmund have proved highly lucrative; and they have been successful in driving imported beer out of the market.

Then it should be remembered that much valuable research work has been done in the country, and that the characteristic German virtue of thoroughness has been

manifest in the systematic labours of such men as H. Hahn, Rath, Schenck, G. Hartmann, Lotz, Range, Schinz, Schultze and Rohrbach, who have done much for knowledge in the realms of history, ethnology, geology, philology, and economics. The peculiar problems of the country have been most diligently studied, and maps dealing with geological features, rainfall, vegetation, distribution of wild animals, etc., have been compiled with great skill and most careful attention to detail.

On the whole Germany is able to give a fairly good account of her stewardship so far as the development of the colony is concerned. Thirty years is a short period in which to look for broad and beneficial results in a land that has many natural disadvantages; that so much has been achieved is a tribute to the patience and persistence of the settlers.

## **THE DIAMOND FIELDS**



## CHAPTER X

### THE DIAMOND FIELDS

THE discovery of diamonds near Luderitzbucht in 1908 was an event of great importance to the country, and in view of the value of the diamond fields, and the powerful influence they have had on the economical development of the country, we shall give some account of their discovery, probable origin, and the nature of the mining operations connected with them.

There can hardly be a more dreary place on earth than the strip of desert land that borders the coast of South-West Africa, and it is hardly a matter for surprise that geologists tramped leisurely over the

wind-blown sand dunes, making careful note of the geological features of the country, without for a moment suspecting that the gravel beneath their feet was thickly studded with the hard and brilliant little "stones of fire" known as diamonds. Somehow or other it is not the lot of the geologist to discover gems and gold in South Africa. A child playing with the pebbles on a river bank; a poor Dutch farmer lazily sifting gravel through a coarse wire sieve; a prospector sinking a well in search of water; a kaffir shovelling sand—in such unromantic ways have Nature's chiefest treasures come to light in this land.

One day in April of 1908, a kaffir working on the Kolmanskuppe railway line, not far from Luderitzbucht, picked out of a shovelful of coarse sand a small, rough,

whitish stone that sparkled in the sunlight. Little did the "boss" to whom he showed it dream that in the tiny stone lay the promise of an increase in the revenue of the country of nearly seven million sterling in half a dozen years, and the conversion of the tin-shanty settlement at Luderitzbucht into a substantial and progressive little town in the same period. But so it proved.

As luck would have it, the native had worked in the De Beers diamond mines at Kimberley ; he knew the difference between a rough diamond and a white pebble. Had he not received a substantial bonus from the compound manager as a reward for his honesty whenever he discovered a "fire stone" in the blue ground and handed it over to the official ? But his "boss" laughed at him when he said it was a diamond, and told him to "get out!"

The railway contractor, however, a gentleman named Stauch, laughed after another fashion when the gem came into his hands. He hurried off to Swakopmund, and there sought an interview with the owners of the land, the Deutsches Kolonial Gesellschaft. He came back with half a dozen licences in his pocket which gave him the right to peg certain extensive areas. It was not long before little parcels of the gleaming gems were in his possession. The wise Herr Stauch is now a diamond magnate.

The news of the wonderful discovery quickly spread, and before many months had passed companies were exploiting the gravel occurrences. It is amusing to recall to-day the ridicule heaped on these "discoveries" by financial and other journals. The gems were "dolls' diamonds," "diamondettes"; it was "financial folly" to

pick up these little glittering, weather-beaten specks. With a characteristic display of journalistic wit, one well-known weekly affirmed that "he would be an ass indeed to allow himself to be imposed upon by such 'carats' as these." But the carats recovered last year, for instance, were valued at the nice little sum of £2,945,975.

The diamondiferous area is an extensive one. It is a strip of sandy country near the coast, from 2 to 12 miles wide, extending intermittently from Conception Bay (100 miles south of Swakopmund) to Angra Juntas, some 60 miles north of the Orange River, a total distance of about 250 miles. The strip is broken by a chain of hills and rocky ridges running mainly from north to south. In the wide valleys and depressions thus formed, ranging from 2 to 3 feet above sea-level to over 500 feet, the

diamondiferous gravel is found. The deposits are by no means uniform. Large stretches of ground may not contain a single stone, while a rich "pocket" may hold scores of the glittering gems. The patch, too, that is so rich in diamonds may have a surface view precisely similar to that of the barren areas around. Such freaks of deposit seemed to some of the early prospectors to be the work of whimsical genii.

The precious stones lie among tiny fragments of banded agate, red garnet, red jasper, chalcedony, milky quartz, and sand.

The deposit varies in depth from 6 inches to 15 feet. Over the mixture the furious trade winds from the south rage for eight or nine months in the year. A process of natural concentration proceeds apace. The light particles are caught up and whirled

away to the sand dunes, until in many places nothing is left but the heavy diamonds and a thin layer of coarse particles. Naturally, the little depressions here and there, especially those on the windward side of obstacles, have a good concentration of rich detritus. The gems are never found in any quantity in the valleys that run from east to west, but in those that lie in the line of the prevailing wind.

The diamonds found in this sand are peculiar to the country. They are wholly unlike any other known African stones. When in 1901 some natives professed to have found certain small stones in the alluvial diggings on the Vaal River, the experts knew at once they were not river stones. The boys had stolen them from German South-West Africa. All shades of colour are found among them, but the

stones of a clear white appearance, with a barely perceptible yellowish tinge, predominate. Pale pinks and lemon yellows are fairly common. Impure shades are remarkably few, and fully 85 per cent. of the gems are fit for cutting. They are said to resemble the stones derived from Brazil. In size they are small; it takes six or eight to make a carat as a rule, but a few large stones have been found. One weighed 34 carats and another 17 carats. These large stones, however, are very exceptional.

How did the diamonds get there? That these lustrous gems should sprinkle the sand so thickly in this dreary region may well give cause for wonder. Geologists differ as to their probable source of origin. Dr. Wagner, in his exhaustive work on "The Diamond Mines of Southern Africa," summarises the main theories as follows:

(1) The diamonds were released by weathering from the crystalline rocks of the basement system.

(2) The diamonds were derived from the denudation of the primary deposits of British South Africa, carried down to sea by the Orange River and distributed along the coast by the agency of the Benguella current.

(3) A modification of the second hypothesis, according to which the diamonds were carried down to the sea from sources believed to exist within the interior of German South-West Africa.

(4) The parent rock of the diamonds lies submerged off the present coast.

Dr. Wagner dismisses the first three, and advances arguments in favour of the fourth. He concludes that they have been

derived "from a primary deposit, or from primary deposits, which now lie buried beneath the sea somewhere off Pomona," as there is a steady—if not quite persistent—increase in the average size of the stones as one proceeds from north to south, until the Pomona area is reached, where the average weight is greater than anywhere else. On this supposition the lighter stones have been swept northward by a strong ocean current when the coast was still submerged. To this we may add the statement of Dr. Marloth that among "the prospectors who know the country south of Prince of Wales Bay, the belief is quite common that Pomona diamonds came from some volcanic fissures that occurred there." Kimberlite "pipes" and dykes occur in the Keetmanshoop, Gibeon and Bethany districts, but they contain no diamonds.

Dr. Versfeld, however, is of the opinion that the diamond-bearing gravel is not of marine origin, but debris from diamond "pipes" which has been concentrated by the strong winds. It is quite possible, he argues, that the stones may have been transported hundreds of miles, but he recognises the futility of laying down hard-and-fast theories. He ventures to affirm, however, that the discovery of diamond-bearing pipes "much nearer to the Luderitzbucht deposits than those at present known seems well within the bounds of probability." And with that pleasant probability we leave the matter of the origin of the stones.

All the mineral rights of the diamond fields have been held by the German Colonial Company, and their "sphere of influence" extends for over 300 miles

along the coast and about 60 miles inland. Six companies—each with a fifty years' concession from the Colonial Company—practically monopolised the industry. These are the Pomona Diamantminen Gesellschaft, the Koloniale Bergbaugesellschaft, the Diamanten Pachtgesellschaft, the Deutsche Diamantengesellschaft, the Vereinigte Diamantminen, Luderitzbucht, and the Kolmanskop Diamond Mines, Ltd. The Kolmanskop Company is registered in the Cape Province, and they have a valuable holding of about 10,000 acres, 6 miles from Luderitzbucht.

The first stage in exploitation is rather picturesque, from the spectator's point of view. You plod up the side of a sand dune and, on gaining the top, look down into the depression below and see, perhaps, a dozen natives crawling about the sand

on all fours as if in search of coins or gems which some one has dropped. You watch them. One man is using the flat of his hand as a scoop, running it slowly through the sand ; another is "harrowing" with his fingers ; a third squats on his haunches native fashion and gazes intently at a little heap of particles in his hand, while another, by a hoarse exclamation, draws attention to something in the palm of his hand. These boys are "sampling" the ground. It is a laborious and most trying task in the fierce summer sun. The top layer of diamondiferous gravel is invariably richer than any underlying deposit, so it is possible to get a fairly accurate idea of the value of the detritus by this primitive picking. "Washing" tests are sometimes made instead of hand sampling. Should the boys succeed in finding a fair number

of gems, the second stage is entered upon. This is very prosaic. The deposit is shovelled into swinging sieves (the "babies" of the Vaal River diggings, slightly improved), set in a rectangular frame. The sieve is swung backwards and forwards in order to eliminate the fine sand, which falls to the ground. The screened gravel is then conveyed to the concentration plant for further treatment. On some of the claims the deposit is excavated by dredgers which use large electric shovels.

The jiggling plant—highly specialised machinery—receives the gravel in capacious hopper mouths, a process of digestion goes on to the sound of much crunching and groaning, the useless tailings are thrust out, while the diamonds are ingeniously hustled into a place of security from which they can be easily removed at intervals. Fully

90 per cent. of the gems in the gravel are recovered in this way. Immense sums of money have been spent on machinery. Huge structures have sprung up on the sandy waste; and it is claimed that on some properties the equipment is even superior to that of the highly elaborated plant at Kimberley. Certainly this lavish expenditure on central concentration plant shows a great faith in the future possibilities of the industry.

Several of the mining properties are linked up to Luderitzbucht by light railways, and the companies in the vicinity of the town draw their electric power for the machinery from the well-equipped power-station at Luderitz Bay. Oil engines are in use on the distant claims. The entire coastal belt is practically a desert, and the little water found here and there in the

wells that have been sunk is too brackish for human consumption ; so water, both for drinking and diamond-washing purposes, is derived from the sea. Large condensers have been erected on the coast ; the water is conveyed along pump lines, and also transported to the distant claims by water-carts and in tanks carried by camels. The pump line from Elisabeth Bay to Kolmanskuppe is no less than 17 miles in length. Some 5,000 natives and coloured men were in the employ of the various companies before the war ; the majority of the natives were Ovambos, but Cape boys were found in large numbers. The pay for the Ovambos was at the rate of £1 5s. per month, with rations, while the more satisfactory Cape boys received £3 per month, with rations.

Working costs vary considerably. The

factors which determine them are: the situation of the claims, the richness of the deposit, and the scale of operations. In the case of five companies, we give the figures for 1913:

	Average Cost per Carat.	Average Value.
	s. d.	s. d.
Pomona Diamantminen Gesellschaft - - - - -	1 6	50 0
Koloniale Bergbaugesellschaft - - - - -	8 0	40 0
Deutsche Diamantengesellschaft - - - - -	15 0	45 0
Diamanten Paschtgesellschaft - - - - -	—	40 0
Kolmanskop Diamond Mines, Ltd. - - - - -	10 6	23 6

These figures compare most favourably with those of the South African diamond mines. The average cost per carat from the Premier Mine, for instance, is 11s., while the average value is only 22s. But it must be remembered that operations begin on these fields at what may be called the

middle stage of the Kimberley activities. Underground mining, flooring, and washing, in connection with the Kimberley mines, involve enormous expenditure, so it can readily be understood that the working costs of exploiting a gravelly surface deposit will be, other things being equal, considerably less than the mining of underground diamondiferous rock.

The German Government derived a good revenue from the fields, as they imposed a tax of 66 per cent. of the output value, less 70 per cent. of the working costs. Prior to 1912, the heavy taxation and royalties absorbed from 45 to 50 per cent. of the gross value of the output, but the scheme of taxation was amended as above. In addition to the tax the Government enjoyed a monopoly in the sale of the stones. Producers were compelled to sell them

through a Government organisation in Berlin, called the Diamant Regie, and a commission of 2 per cent. was charged on all sales made. On presenting his diamonds to the representative of the Regie at Luderitzbucht, the producer received 12 marks (a little less than 12s.) per carat on account. He had to wait until the Regie had disposed of the gems ; then the Government tax and the Regie's commission were deducted from the amount paid for them, and the balance came at length into his hands. Early in 1914 the Regie was re-organised and came under the management of the parties directly interested in the revenue derived from the sale of the diamonds. Half the shares were held by the Government and half by the mining companies. The Government also had large interests in the Fiskus block of

claims, which during 1913 produced an average of about 12,000 carats per month, so even if the Government should make no change in the present law in South-West Africa, they stand to reap a rich harvest from the fields. The areas owned by private companies cannot, of course, be confiscated.

In view of the fact that South-West Africa may now be regarded as a part of the British Empire, the probable life of the fields is a matter of very real interest and importance. The experts differ, but there is reason to believe that they will yield diamonds in good number for many years. There are some who fix the limit at fifteen years. Writing in 1913, Dr. Wagner states that "a long and prosperous career may confidently be predicted" for the industry. Probably they will last another twenty

years. It is true that certain rich claims have already been worked out, but vast areas of low-grade gravel yet remain to be exploited. It is estimated that no less than £20,000,000 sterling worth of gems are in sight on the 10,000 acres held by the Kolmanskop Company. During 1913 areas considered unworkable were dealt with at a good profit owing to the introduction of modern plant; the northern fields in the neighbourhood of Conception Bay and Spencer Bay, which had been neglected for some time, were added to the list of profitable propositions. It is not at all unlikely that new deposits will be discovered. It is believed that diamonds were found off Pomona as a result of dredging operations, but these activities were abruptly terminated by an Imperial Decree. Diamonds have been found on Possession Island and

Halifax Island (British possessions for many years), but the cost of the prospecting operations, which was considerably in excess of the value of the stones found, did not encourage the Union Government to follow up the discoveries. As the gems are found along the coast and on the islands off the coast, it is not unreasonable to infer that they lie in the sand of the sea-bed, unless they have been dropped from the clouds. Here is an opportunity for an enterprising syndicate. Then it must be remembered that the war has seriously affected the diamond trade. The market will take years to recover. Even when conditions swing back to normal it will be some time before the market will be able to absorb the existing stock of stones. To continue working these fields at the rate of output shown by the figures for 1914,

for instance, would be worse than folly. Wisdom will dictate a considerable lessening of the output, and this, of course, will have the effect of prolonging the life of the fields, an altogether desirable state of affairs, since the revenue may then be used to develop the agricultural resources of the hinterland. Whether the many German shareholders will consider this wise or pleasant is another matter. Up to the present the main portion of the profits has gone into Government revenue to pay for the civil administration of the country, but the bulk of the dividends paid to shareholders has gone into the pockets of men who reside out of the country. The investors, except in a few instances, have had the satisfaction of drawing some fat dividends. The Koloniale Bergbaugesellschaft paid out in 1912 the nice little

dividend of 3,800 per cent.; the year before it was 2,500. The Pomona Company paid out at the rate of 175 per cent. in 1913, while the Kolmanskop Company paid 30 per cent. in 1912.

#### DIAMONDS PRODUCED IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA SINCE 1908.

Year.	Carats.	Value.	Value per Carat.
		£	s. d.
1908 - -	39,762	53,842	27 1
1909 - -	519,190	704,123	29 0·5
1910 - -	792,642	1,015,779	25 7
1911 - -	766,465	968,418	25 3·1
1912 - -	992,380	1,408,738	28 4·7
1913* - -	1,470,000	2,953,500	40 1·9
<b>TOTAL</b> -	<b>4,580,439</b>	<b>£7,104,400</b>	<b>—</b>

The figures given in the last Consular Report (1913) differ slightly from the above, which are from Dr. Wagner's volume, "The Diamond Mines of Southern Africa." The Consul's figures are as follows :

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\* Of the 1913 production only 1,284,727 carats were sold.

							Carats.
1908	-	-	-	-	-	-	39,375
1909	-	-	-	-	-	-	483,268
1910	-	-	-	-	-	-	867,296
1911	-	-	-	-	-	-	747,152
1912	-	-	-	-	-	-	985,882
1913	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,570,000

The Consul also appends a statement showing the output of diamonds during the last three years from mines in the Union of South Africa, and the sales of German South-West African stones during the same period. These figures are deeply significant, and serve to show how important a factor in the diamond market these stones have become.

Year.	Country.	Carats.	Value.
1911	Union of S. Africa - " German S.W. Africa	4,891,998 816,296	£ 8,746,724 1,019,444
1912	Union of S. Africa - " German S.W. Africa	5,071,882 902,157	10,061,489 1,303,092
1913	Union of S. Africa - " German S.W. Africa	5,163,546 1,284,727	11,389,807 2,153,230



## **THE ECONOMIC FUTURE**



## CHAPTER XI

### THE ECONOMIC FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY

AFTER a visit paid to South Africa in 1895, Mr. (now Viscount) Bryce published a volume of "Impressions," in which he made the following reference to South-West Africa: "Great Namaqualand and Damaraland constitute an enormous wilderness, very thinly peopled, because the means of life are very scanty . . . the country taken all in all, and excepting the little explored districts to the north-east, towards the Upper Zambesi—districts whose resources are still very imperfectly known—is a

dreary and desolate region, which seems likely to prove of little value."\*

That this was the prevailing opinion of the country for many years there can be no doubt to the student of South African history, but with the development of the territory by the Germans opinion has undergone a radical change, and it is now recognised that South-West Africa is a valuable mineral and agricultural country.

What is the future of the country to be under British rule? Herr Dernburg had no doubt what it would be under German rule. He regarded it as the most promising of the German overseas possessions, and saw in it a "potential Argentina or Canada," and anticipated the day when the "tide of immigration will turn thither from the

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\* Bryce, "Impressions of South Africa," p. 37.

channels which in the past depleted the home country, without helping towards the consolidation of a new Germany abroad," and he points to the day when "3,000,000 cattle and 10,000,000 sheep will pasture upon its vast inland prairies." But according to his critics Herr Dernburg was a colonial enthusiast who "juggled with millions and balanced himself with percentages." One has more than a suspicion that he was in the habit of holding out to his countrymen brilliant pictures of a prosperous colonial empire in the effort to keep warm the colonial breast. His favourite story is "of a box of dates that was lost several years ago on the way, and now offers to the sight of the wandering traveller date palms 10 feet high bearing fruit."

Dr. Karl Peters, on the other hand, roundly affirms that South-West Africa

"does not equal the poorest part of South Africa." But while Herr Dernburg is probably guilty of over-adulation, Dr. Karl Peters is certainly at the opposite extreme of undue depreciation. South-West Africa is not a land of milk and honey ; and there is no immediate prospect that it will become a Canada or a second edition of the Rand. The many German Commissioners who have carefully investigated the natural conditions of the colony have held out no brilliant hopes of a colonial Atlanta ; they have simply described a possible land of settlement in which some thousands of white settlers may live in health and comparative prosperity, and this is an eminently reasonable view of the country.

The three great natural sources of wealth in the country are : minerals, pasture land, and agricultural land.

The mineral wealth is the most considerable source of prosperity, and is likely to exercise a most important influence on the immediate future of the colony. The diamond fields will not be exhausted, perhaps, for another twenty years ; and should there be a considerable restriction of the output on resuming operations, as is likely, the fields may be a source of wealth for a much longer period. Development work in the existing copper mines has greatly improved the prospects of the mining companies, since the continuity of the ore to greater depths has been definitely proved. It has also been ascertained that the copper ores in the Otavi Valley belong to the same formation as the rich Tsumeb occurrence, and there is reason to hope that the Otavi Valley mines will prove payable to greater depths and that fresh

mines may be opened up between the Otavi Valley and Tsumeb. The Khan mine, which is now connected to the Otavi railway by a branch line, has lately been equipped with up-to-date machinery, including a powerful concentration plant, and this mine is certain to be a factor of importance in the industry. Other discoveries go to show that for many years to come South-West Africa will export copper in large quantities.

"The copper-bearing 'quartz mica diorite' of O'okiep (Little Namaqualand) has not yet been discovered," says Dr. Versfeld, who has made a close study of the geology of Southern Namaqualand, "but the possibilities are very much in favour of this rock being found."

Increase in the tin and marble production may be anticipated, while the galena and

wolfram deposits in the area of the South African Territories Company, and the iron ore deposits in Kaokoland, still await development. Mica will probably be a payable proposition in Southern Namaqualand before long. Hopes are entertained by prospectors that gold will be found in payable quantities, but a dearth of capital and official restrictions have prevented the thorough investigation of many promising deposits. Dr. Versfeld is of the opinion that it is not likely that gold will be found in the primary formation in Great Namaqualand, as he had examined numerous quartz reefs and conglomerates and found them particularly poor in that metal, but, he writes, "there is every possibility of valuable deposits of minerals being discovered, particularly in the Great and Little Karas Mountains, which are the

contact zones between intrusive plutonic and volcanic rocks and sedimentary rocks."\* The possibility of finding coal, however, seems to grow more remote, though the formation of the country is analogous to that of the Cape Province.

The concessions system does not seem to have been the success it was anticipated to be, since of the eight companies with an original total capital of about £4,300,000, six companies appear to have spent about £400,000, half of which represented a loss from which no benefit accrued to the colony. With an efficient and sympathetic administration capital should be attracted to the country; a rich mineral treasure house may then be unlocked. There are vast areas in Ovamboland which have not even

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\* *South African Journal of Science*, March, 1915.

been prospected in the most cursory fashion.

Dr. Paul Rohrbach, the Imperial Emigration Commissioner, in "Die Deutschen Kolonien" (1914), expects much from the mineral wealth of the country. With only the diamond fields and the copper mines of Otavi and Tsumeb in operation, he finds the prospect distinctly encouraging, and in the likely event of other large deposits of valuable minerals being discovered, he anticipates that a strong development would set in. Even if no extraordinary discoveries are made he is convinced that the total value of the imports will be easily doubled in the course of the next decade.

Herr Grotefeld, in "Under Kolonialwesen," describes the trackless wildernesses of sand in the coastal regions, and the

desolate nature of some parts of the country, but he states that the colony will be able to support a large mining population, and he admits that the mountains are "rich mineral treasure houses."

As a stock-raising country South-West Africa has great possibilities. Dr. Rohrbach writes : " In spite of the varied nature of the land, from the Orange River in the south to the Kunene in the north, and from the Namib in the west to the Kalahari in the east, its vegetation and conformation are those of a sub-tropical steppe and grazing country, which is marked out by Nature herself for cattle raising. Herr Hermann, in " Viehacht und Bodenkultur in Deutsch Sud-West Africa " (1914), confirms this estimate, and states that " the whole country is open to cattle breeders. Every blade of grass, every leaf,

every shoot possesses unusual nourishing properties. This is proved by the fat, good condition and strength of cattle, mules, horses, etc., fed on this dry but extraordinarily nourishing fodder, even after a ten months' drought. One district is best for cattle breeding, another for small stock, and yet another for horse raising, but cattle can be bred everywhere, and even the most desolate, desert-like districts can be turned to account by grazing the cattle over a large area."

After thorough examination of the territory Dr. Rohrbach estimated that the grazing land was equal in area to that of the German Empire in Europe, and capable of carrying 3,000,000 head of cattle and 2,000,000 sheep and goats.

But although large areas may be suitable for live stock it must be remembered that

this does not by any means imply a large population. The pasturage is thin, droughts are frequent, and small farms are practically useless. A farm capable of giving any adequate return should be at least 20,000 acres in extent. Two or three white men on such a farm would be quite able to attend to the stock with the help of a few natives. South-West Africa is not a country for close settlement, and the efforts made to start settlers near the towns with small farms have not been attended with much success. An inquiring would-be colonist was told by the emigration department of the German Colonial Society that "in South-West Africa, which is chiefly suited for cattle breeding, at least £1,000 or £1,250 has hitherto been regarded as necessary." It may be urged that Boer settlers with considerably less

than £1,000 have found it profitable to take up farming in the country, but none the less the small farmer is not likely to find much success in the colony. When "carefully developed," Dr. Rohrbach estimates that the country will be able to maintain a population of several hundred thousand European settlers, but in making this estimate Dr. Rohrbach would appear to be slightly infected with the rosy optimism of Herr Dernburg.

The Karakul fur industry is likely to prove an asset of increasing value. Karakul sheep, which supply the "Persian" lamb fur, or the curly black Karakul, were first imported into the country from Bokhara in 1907, and they have been bred on a Government farm near Windhoek with most satisfactory results.

The Karakul has been crossed with the

Afrikander, and many thousands of the half-bred animals are now in existence. On the heights of Damaraland and Namaqualand the Karakuls find most congenial climatic conditions, and they seem to thrive on the pasturage of the country. Sample skins sent to Europe have sold for as much as £2 ; but it is stated that the industry can be carried on at a profit if the skins realise from 10s. to 15s. each. The mutton of these animals is of a superior kind.

It may be predicted with safety that frozen meat will be one of the chief exports in the coming years. Walvis Bay is comparatively near to Europe, and with a direct steamship service to British ports, it will be possible to establish a lucrative industry in slaughtered cattle and sheep. Germany was hoping to profit considerably by the

development of the pastoral lands of the territory, but the stream will now be diverted to Great Britain and the Union of South Africa.

The third source of wealth is the agricultural lands. As already stated, there are only 13,000 acres under cultivation, and this fact is explained by the dryness of the climate. The rainfall is too scanty, and the soil of too sandy a nature, to permit of extensive cultivation without artificial aids. Much might be done by the introduction of improved methods of farming and by means of irrigation, since the soil is amazingly fertile. Dr. Rohrbach maintains that the land is much better and more fertile than most parts of Cape Colony.

The rich silt lands of the Kuisip River, and the alluvial loams of the Kuisip Valley, for instance, wait for exploitation by the

man who will tap the underground stores of water and send them out over the fertile tracts. A good start has been made in this connection by some of the farmers in the northern districts, and further developments may be anticipated.

It is significant that owing to drought the crops of 1913 were a total failure, with the exception—and the exception is important—of those under irrigation. There should be no great difficulty in the way of developing the water supply, since the country seems to have a good supply of underground water. Even in the Kalahari nine artesian wells were struck last year by boring in the valley of the Auob River. Fresh boreholes have developed an ample supply for the town of Windhoek, with more than sufficient to meet the need for an underground drainage system. The two

perennial streams of the country—the Kunene and the Orange—are of little economic value, since the channels are too deep to serve the purposes of extensive irrigation. According to the report made in 1913 of the irrigation possibilities along the banks of the Orange, by Mr. A. D. Lewis, the Government engineer, the irrigable patches found here and there on the northern bank are less than 3,000 morgen; there are about 4,000 morgen on the south bank. Until wells are dug, dams made, large irrigation works executed, and markets for produce opened up, agriculture will play only a subordinate part in South-West African industry, and the energies of the whites will be devoted to the exploitation of the mineral wealth and the raising of cattle and sheep.

The progress of the country has been

retarded by a shortage of native labour. Some farmers affirm that they can make no progress whatever owing to the scarcity and unreliability of native workmen, but, as the ex-Consul shrewdly observes in his last Report on the Trade of German South-West Africa (1913), "As a rule a farmer who knows how to manage his servants and understands their limitations has no difficulty in getting his work done. On some farms there are sufficient labourers for every emergency, while on others there are a few dissatisfied servants, who take the first opportunity they can of changing their master."

The difficulty of obtaining labour has hampered the exploitation of the mineral resources of the colony, and during recent years Cape boys have been imported in considerable numbers. The Germans,

however, have only themselves to blame for this shortage, as in decimating the Hereros they destroyed the best material for developing the resources of the country. Forced labour was tried with the Herero and Hottentot captives after the wars, and even in 1913 the police were kept busy collecting stray natives and apportioning them to masters in need of servants.

Efforts have been made by the mining authorities lately to attract more labourers from Ovamboland by effecting improvements in respect to the feeding, clothing, housing, and transport of men, and in the hospital arrangements, and the standard wage has been raised 25 per cent. With a more sympathetic administration and an influx of settlers who understand the native, the problem of the native labour supply might find a partial solution, but

it will probably continue to be a source of anxiety for some time to come. In many parts of the Union of South Africa the farmers are confronted with a similar difficulty.

Will South-West Africa ever become a manufacturing country? Certainly there is no prospect of it at present. The requisites for producing manufactured articles, such as a big market, cheap sources of mechanical power, and cheap and efficient labour, are all wanting, and they are not likely to be available, at any rate in the present generation. Such demand for manufactured goods as there is can easily be met by importation from Europe. The lack of a good port has been a drawback to German enterprise, but Walvis Bay will now take its proper place as the natural harbour of the country, and its importance is certain to grow.

In regard to the immediate future of the country, Mr. A. Wyatt Tilby has suggested recently in the *Nineteenth Century* that the land required by the Union Government of South Africa for the *blijwoners* or "poor whites" lies now at the very door of the Union in Namaqualand and Damaraland. But as we have shown, this is not the country for the small farmer. Very substantial help would have to be forthcoming from the Government before the unenterprising *blijwoners* could make a living out of the soil. Many parts of South Africa are far more suitable for close settlement schemes than Namaqualand and Damaraland. Germany made many efforts to get the right kind of settler into the country. To the 22,000 soldiers who took part in the native wars the Government made an offer of £300 to each man who wished to establish

himself as a farmer in the colony. Only 5 per cent. remained.

Experience has shown that no scheme of colonisation has much chance of success by which men are bribed to become settlers : it is only by making it worth their while to settle, by affording encouragement to energy, initiative and resource, that the right stamp of men are attracted.

To sum up the facts then and state our conclusions : South-West Africa is a country rich in mineral wealth, that needs exploitation ; it is a fine grazing country that will carry hundreds of thousands of cattle ; it is a comparatively poor agricultural land, whose principal need is irrigation ; and it shows no sign of becoming a manufacturing country even on a small scale. The white population will remain scanty in proportion to the area of the country.

That in the course of the next twenty-five years it will become the home of 25,000 white families is as much as a reasoned optimism can expect. The intrusion of the unexpected in the shape of a discovery of valuable minerals in payable quantities would, of course, upset our calculations, but all that we can do is to point out the probable result of present conditions.

A word may be added about the disposal of the country. Sir Harry H. Johnston has raised the question in a recent article contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*. He expresses the opinion that "at the present time it would not be advisable unduly to increase the area under the Union Government of South Africa where it embraces a large native population," since "the British and Dutch colonists of temperate

South Africa are unwilling to concede to their black and brown fellow-countrymen that equality before the law which England with her larger imperial experience regards as the necessary basis of peaceful government"; so he suggests that the "more negro portions of which are Ovamboland and northern Damaraland," should, "at any rate for the present, either be governed by the Administrator of Rhodesia or by some other British official appointed from London."

Without going into the matter of the fitness of the people to govern the natives, it can hardly be expected that South Africans would view such a proposal with equanimity should it be made with any seriousness. To South Africa was given the task of conquering the territory, and in addition to the fact that the country will

appropriately "round off the Union," powerful sentimental considerations will have to be taken into account. A country in which Afrikanders have fallen in war and have been buried will have more than a material value in the eyes of Africa's sons. For the first time in history British and Dutch have fought side by side on African soil to overthrow the common enemy, and the land won amid such conditions will always have peculiar value to those who have made sacrifices to secure it. No: South-West Africa must drop into its natural place as an integral part of the Union of South Africa.

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**ANNEX D.—EXPORTS DURING THE YEARS 1911-13.**

Item.	Articles.	1913.*		
		1911.	1912.	1913.*
I.	Products of agriculture and forestry and articles pertaining to these - - -	Marks. 4,345	Marks. 28,368	Marks. 3,662
II.	Animals and animal products : (a) Live stock - - - - - (b) Animal products - - - - -	- - - - -	45,515 525,795	53,414 739,515
	Total, Item II.	-	571,310	792,929
III.	Raw minerals and fossils	-	27,173,079	37,215,380
IV.	Manufactures, curios, etc.	-	824,510	998,663
	Total Exports	-	28,573,244	39,035,340
				29,168,307

\* January 1 to June 30.

**CHIEF ARTICLES OF EXPORT DURING THE YEARS  
1911-13.**

<b>Articles.</b>	<b>1911.</b>	<b>1912.</b>	<b>1913.*</b>
	<b>Marks.</b>	<b>Marks.</b>	<b>Marks.</b>
Cattle - - -	21,600	16,519	6,300
Small Stock - - -	1,890	18,345	28,882
Meat - - -	14,544	28,974	73,850
Horns - - -	24,536	24,003	20,695
Hides, goat and sheep-skins - - -	246,417	297,787	195,318
Skins of wild animals - - -	34,051	29,575	12,550
Sealskins - - -	43,543	41,569	3,330
Ostrich feathers - - -	79,804	97,012	40,769
Wool - - -	74,172	149,658	46,944
Marble - - -	1,232	19,968	10,214
Other earths and stones - - -	9,184	5,485	5,821
Rough diamonds - - -	23,034,146	30,414,078	24,620,968
Copper - - -	325,000	229,850	200,040
Copper ores - - -	1,428,703	6,293,408	2,975,022
Other ores - - -	28,946	15,064	33,545
Lead - - -	345,868	228,127	—
Leather and leather-ware - - -	14,863	18,535	5,020
Photographs - - -	27,158	8,671	3,913
Curios and miscellaneous articles - - -	115,378	154,397	33,249
Packing cases and materials and such-like articles re-exported - - -	667,111	807,060	352,280
Mohair - - -	—	17,617	8,785
Wood and forestry products - - -	779	14,154	330
Tin ore - - -	—	9,400	332,350

\* January 1 to June 30.

**ANNEX E.—STATEMENT SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION OF GERMAN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.**

**RESULT OF CENSUS TAKEN JANUARY 1, 1913, AS COMPARED WITH CENSUS TAKEN JANUARY 1, 1912.**

	White.	Natives of Pro- tectorate.*	Natives and Coloured People from Abroad.	Total.	1912.			1913.		
					White.	Natives of Pro- tectorate.	Natives and Coloured People from Abroad.	White.	Natives of Pro- tectorate.	Natives and Coloured People from Abroad.
Grootfontein	811	14,996	70	15,877	988	11,499	57	12,454		
Outjo	356	7,902	6	8,264	269	7,392	1	7,662		
Omaruru	832	6,563	2	7,397	926	6,907	7	7,840		
Karibib	1,197	5,610	73	6,880	1,170	5,628	23	6,821		
Olkahandja	573	3,723	187	4,483	648	3,933	47	4,628		
Gobabis	342	5,840	21	6,203	409	3,645	7	4,061		
Windhoek	2,895	8,784	192	11,871	2,871	11,068	140	14,109		
Rehoboth	605	9,808	361	10,774	453	9,295	20	9,768		
Gibeon	993	2,285	1,116	4,394	922	2,680	33	3,635		
Maltahöhe	337	1,153	3	1,493	304	1,372	4	1,680		
Keetmanshoop	1,559	6,467	360	8,386	1,115	5,910	231	7,296		
Hasur	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,117	
Warmbad	851	2,024	118	2,993	912	1,999	68	2,979		
Bethanien	395	1,417	91	1,903	373	1,446	71	1,890		
Luderitzbucht	1,676	3,356	1,326	6,358	1,616	3,268	1,706	6,590		
Swakopmund	1,394	2,021	247	3,662	1,463	2,076	219	3,758		
Total	-	14,816	81,949	4,173	100,938	14,830	2,648	96,288		

\*Estimated.

### IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

Year.	Imports.	Exports.
1908 -	£ 1,619,800	£ 80,800
1909 -	1,735,650	1,103,550
1910 -	2,217,200	1,734,550
1911 -	2,265,100	1,428,650
1912 -	1,624,900	1,951,750
1913 -	2,171,200	3,515,100

### MINERALS EXPORTED IN 1913.

	£
Diamonds	2,945,975
Copper	396,436
Tin	31,568
Marble	1,452
Other Ores	2,956
Base Minerals	360
Total	3,378,747

### CULTIVATED LAND IN 1913.

	acres.
Windhoek District	4,535
Grootfontein District	3,702
Omaruru District	1,567
Okahandja District	1,267

Small areas in other districts.

### THE WATER SUPPLIES.

Districts.	Land in acres.	Springs.	Wells.	Water Holes.	Dams.
Windhoek	11,445	12	231	20	35
Luderitsbucht	34,750	1	13	4	—
Swakopmund	25,000	—	1	2	—
Gibeon	16,945	19	128	—	17
Rehoboth	13,473	30	119	1	18
Maltahohe	12,832	13	139	8	6
Outjo	11,930	16	52	—	1
Okahandja	11,855	2	125	4	8
Gobabis	11,445	1	155	—	3
Omaruru	6,757	6	216	9	13
Bethanien	28,035	—	31	—	5
Warmbad	32,130	1	63	4	4

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